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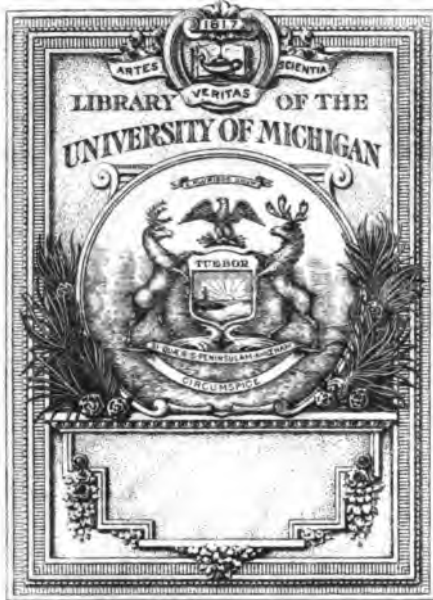
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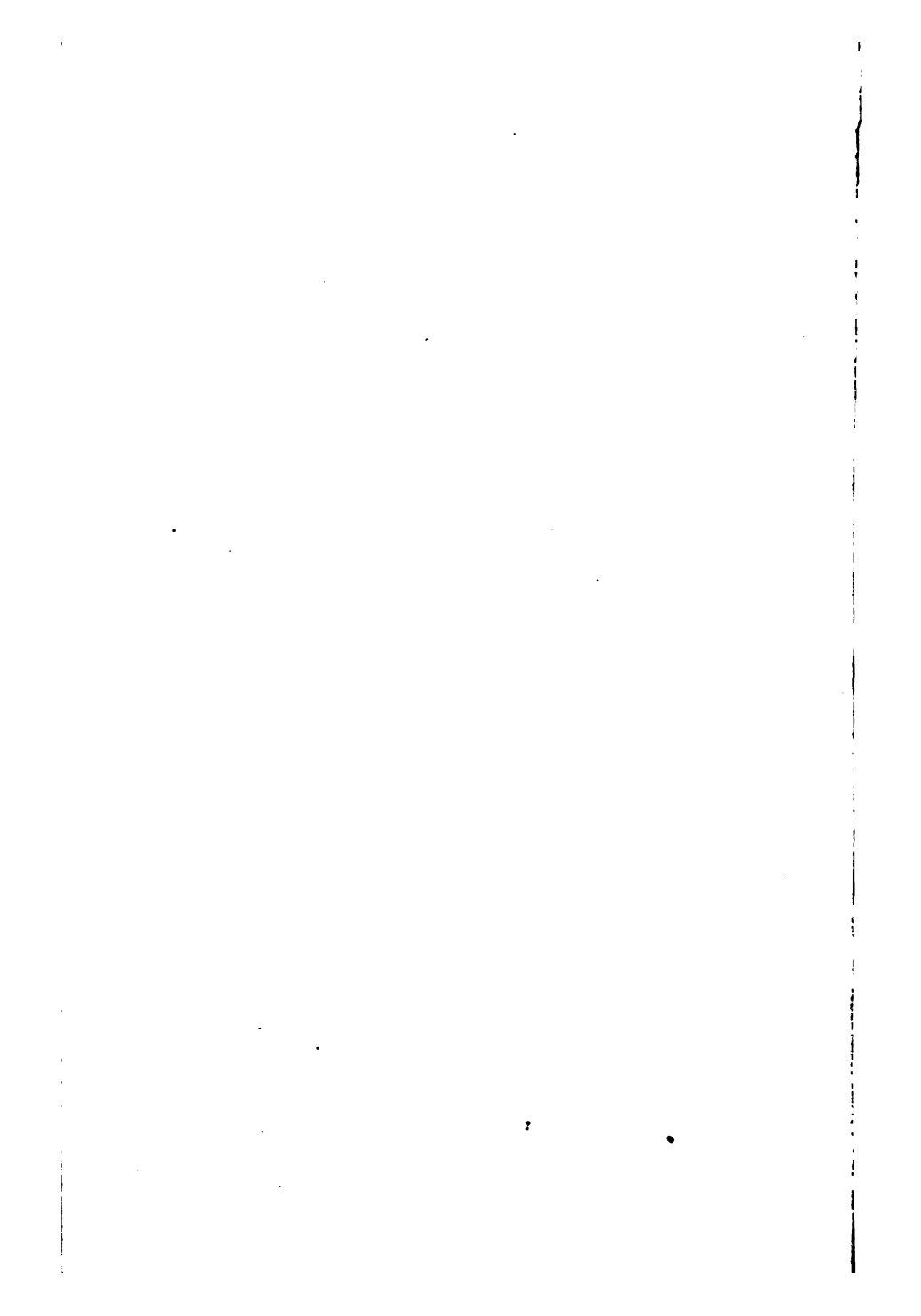
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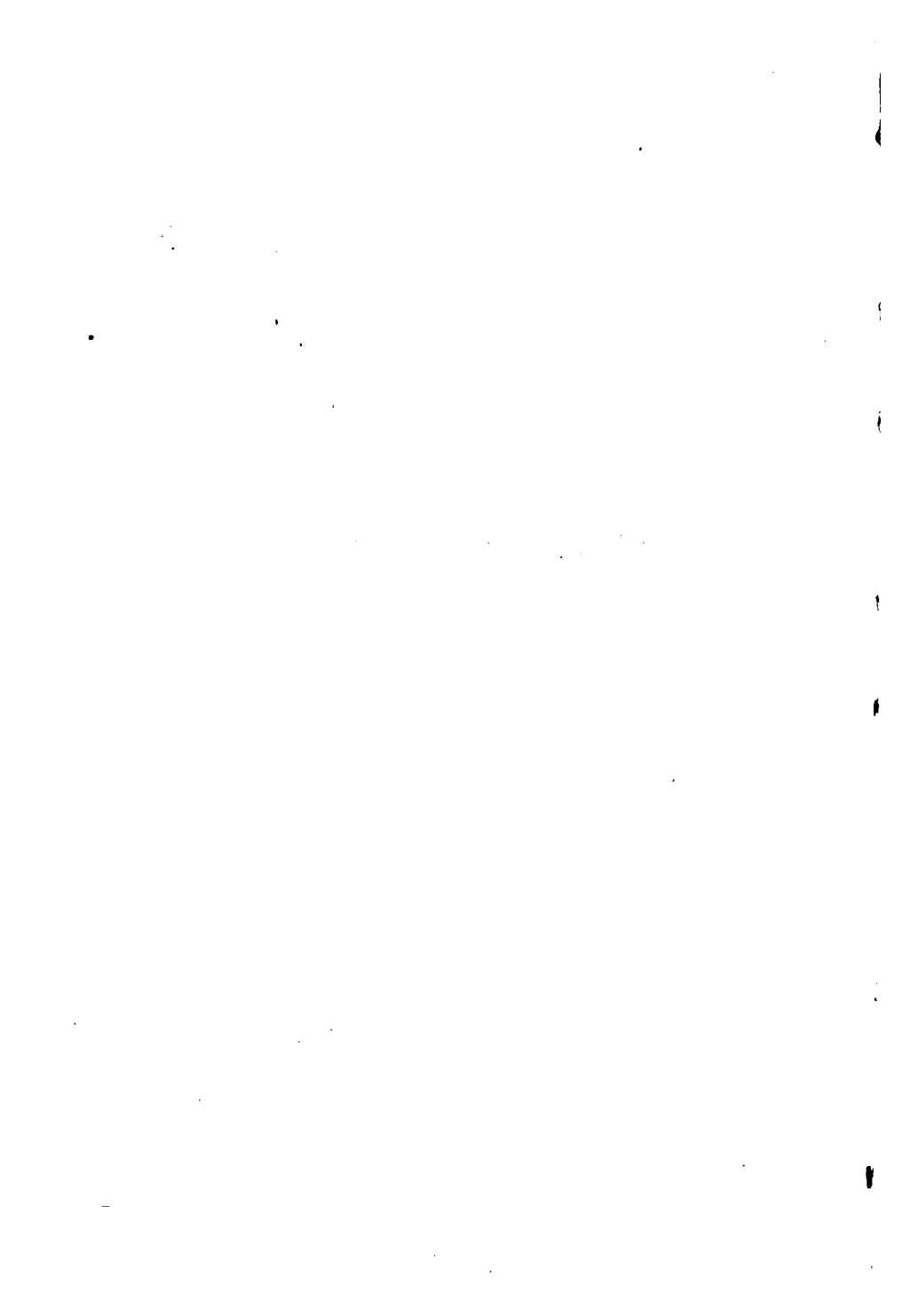
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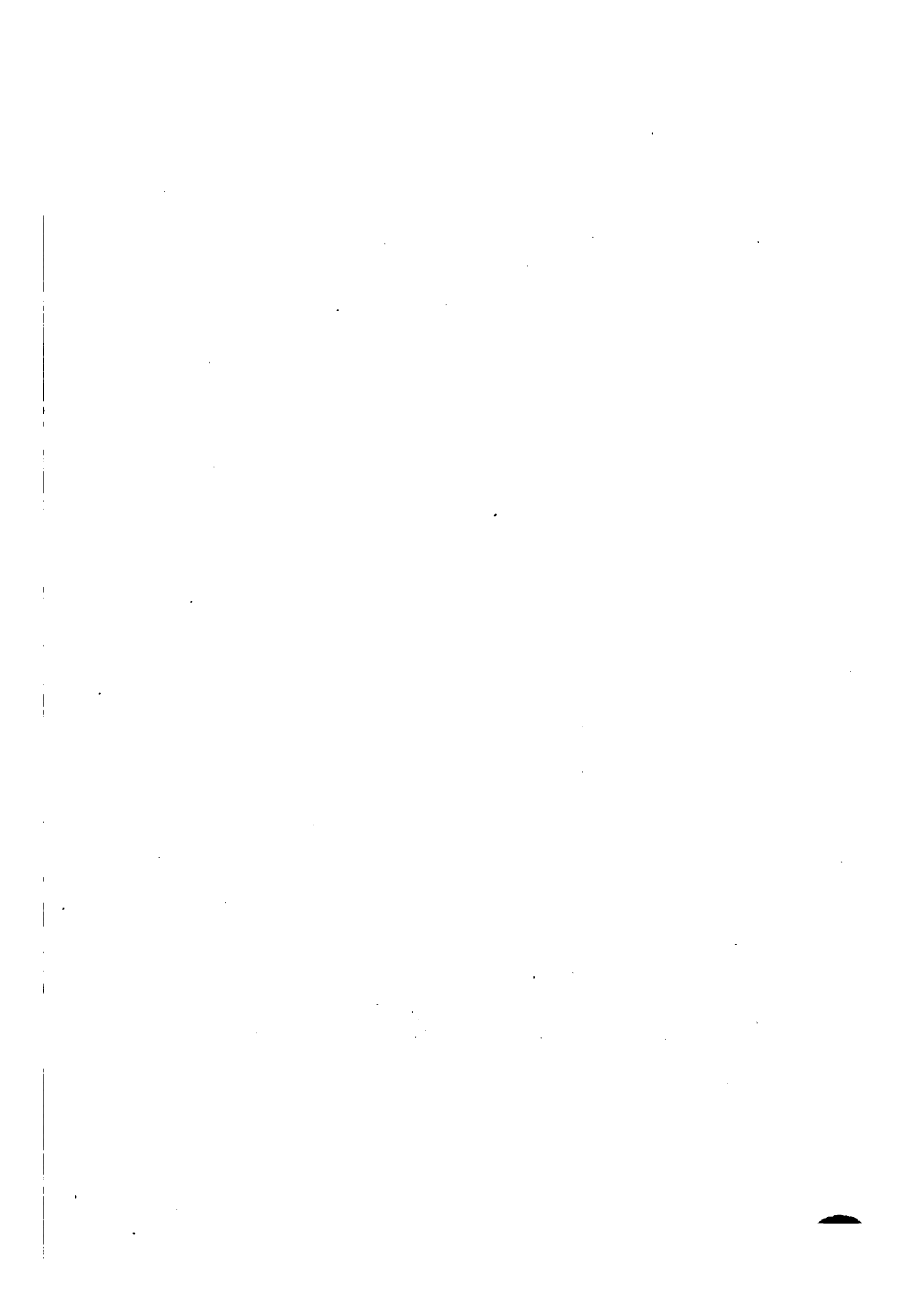
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CHILDREN'S PLAYS







Nick Bluster, with a hop, skip, and jump, blows boisterously and scatters the petals in all directions.

CHILDREN'S PLAYS

BY
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Some of the plays in this volume are original, others are original adaptations which have been made with a free hand from stories or plot incidents found in the works of various writers. Credit is due the following authors and publishers for material used in these adaptations:

Cicely and the Bears. This play is retold from an old poem by William Brighty Rands, an English writer.

The Happy Beggar is an adaptation of the poem entitled, "The Enchanted Shirt," by John Hay, and is used by permission of Houghton, Mifflin and Company.

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The Faithful Shepherd is based on a legend well known in English History.

A Royal Toy-Mender was suggested by an incident in a story of Juliana Horatio Ewing, an English writer.

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INTRODUCTION

The growing use of dramatic material by thoughtful, progressive teachers, attests its value in the educative process. Exercises which call into play the dramatic instinct are being used in many phases of school work, especially in the elementary grades. In these lower classes reading and language lessons are richly vitalized by the kind of activities which appeal to the child's natural impulse to imitate, to act a part.

The little plays in this book, *planned primarily for class room reading lessons*, may be used (1) for practice in oral reading, (2) for original dramatizations in language work, (3) for school entertainments.

I. For Exercises in Reading a Story Told in Dramatic Form.

Several children, each having a part assigned, or each choosing a part, may come before the other members of the class and read a story told in dialogue. This exercise demands concentration, alert attention, and coöperation. The desire to entertain

INTRODUCTION

the listeners furnishes an adequate motive for the readers and induces them to impersonate the characters in the story. Practice in this kind of oral reading develops power to grasp clearly the thought of the printed page, and skill to communicate the thought by means of careful phrasing, shades of emphasis, and natural expression.

II. For Exercises in Language Work.

A short story including only the main dramatic incidents precedes each little play. The thread of plot may be used as a basis for oral dramatization. The pupils must clearly understand each step in the development of the narrative, and must decide on the number of characters necessary to present the play. There should be free class discussion touching suggestions for interpretation and impersonation. When the story is clearly visualized a number of pupils may present the play. Any class room affords enough stage equipment to serve the occasion. The dressing room is out-of-doors; the teacher's desk is an office; the back of the room, a barnyard; a ruler, the king's scepter; a band of white or gold paper cut with a high point serves for a jeweled crown, etc. Trust the pupil's imagination to transform the commonplace. The teacher may guide and suggest but she should give the players large measure of freedom. This delightful phase of oral language work stimulates initiative, resourcefulness, original-

INTRODUCTION

ity, and gives excellent opportunity for practice in expressing ideas.

III. For School Entertainments.

The plays may be used for special occasions. "The New New Year," "Nick Bluster's Trick," "Everyday Gold," "A Royal Toy-Mender," are essentially festival plays and with the addition of simple costumes and scenery may be used for school entertainments. Exercises of this kind may contribute to the school's part in socializing the community.

"Plays in the barn were a favorite amusement," wrote Louisa M. Alcott in an account of her earlier life. "We dramatized the fairy tales in great style. Our giant came tumbling off a loft when Jack cut down the squash vine running up a ladder to represent the immortal bean. Cinderella rolled away in a vast pumpkin, and a long black pudding was lowered by invisible hands to fasten itself on the nose of the woman who wasted her three wishes.

"Pilgrims journeyed over the hill with scrip and staff and cockle-shells in their hats; fairies held their pretty revels among the whispering birches, and strawberry parties in the rustic arbor were honored by poets and philosophers who fed on their wit and wisdom while the little maids served more mortal food."

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

TIME: *Early spring*

PLACE: *Sweet Briar Dell*

CHARACTERS:

Queen of Spring.

Nick Bluster

Jack Frost

Queen of Spring's Handmaidens:

Merry Sunshine

Morning Mist

Evening Dew

South Breeze

Silver Shower

PLOT OF THE PLAY

The King of Winter sends word to the Queen of Spring that his reign is ended. The Queen and her handmaidens meet in Sweet Briar Dell to make spring blossoms for the children's May Day pageant. Nick Bluster and Jack Frost hide in the Dell, spring out, and tease the flower makers.

To punish these tricksters the Queen declares there shall be no spring. She orders her maidens to withdraw from the sunshine and stay with her in South Breeze's cave. Nick Bluster and Jack Frost play another trick in order to draw the Queen and her helpers out of the cave. Then the little clowns beg the Queen's pardon and ask her to forgive them for the sake of the little children who will grieve if they have no spring flowers. The Queen pardons Nick and Jack, who hasten away to the Northland to join King Winter.

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

SCENE: *Sweet Briar Dell. A cave is seen at one side on the bank of an imaginary brook. Jack Frost and Nick Bluster are rollicking about in the merriest kind of way.*

Jack Frost. Tell me your secret, Nick Bluster.

Nick Bluster (looking round). Oh! Are you sure old King Winter's gone? He mustn't find us with our heads together.

Jack Frost (impatiently). He'll not see us in Sweet Briar Dell. Yes, his Majesty's gone.

Nick Bluster. 'Tis well! He would suspect mischief! Ha! ha! ha!

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

Jack Frost. Come, come, Nick. You aren't going to keep a good bit of fun from me, are you? You know I'm always ready to share with you.

Nick Bluster (somewhat secretly). Very well, Jack, I know how we can have some jolly good fun!

Jack Frost. Tell me how.

Nick Bluster. Old King Winter sent his annual message to the Queen of Spring. He told her that he needed a rest so he must go north a little earlier than usual, this year. Ha! ha! ha! But I wasn't ready to go with him.

Jack Frost. I know all about that, Nick, and he is gone. I heard Bleak Blizzard and Snowdrift and Sleet and Hail say they were glad to leave. No doubt they've done good service for three months. But, go on, Nick, tell me your secret.

Nick Bluster. The Queen of Spring was glad to come. She and her handmaidens are planning a wonderful wild flower pageant for the first of May. They are to meet here in Sweet

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

Briar Dell, at noon to-day, and make millions of spring blossoms. What say you, Jack, to a good jolly trick on my Lady Spring and her handmaidens?

Jack Frost. There's nothing I'd like better than a bit of real fun before I leave. Go on, Nick, tell me your plan.

Nick Bluster. You and I will hide in that thicket of saplings. When the Queen and her maidens are busily at work making the blossoms you and I will slip out and—

Jack Frost (nods knowingly). I see, I see—
ha! ha!

Nick Bluster. You will skip about with your icicle wand and touch each maiden's nose. (*Imitating.*) Oh! Oh! Auch! Auch! Can't you hear them scream! Jack!

Jack Frost. And you'll rush about and blow your icy breath on them. So! (*Blows.*)

Nick Bluster. I'll do more than that. I'll scatter their flowers, so—petals and blossoms, so—in all directions. Oh! what fun it will be. Come! Come! It's almost time now

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

and I hear singing. To the thicket, Jack, quickly!

(Jack Frost and Nick Bluster run behind some bushes. Singing is heard. Merry Sunshine enters leading the Queen of Spring and her handmaidens, except South Breeze, to Sweet Briar Dell. Each handmaiden carries a basket full of flower petals. They dance to Merry Sunshine's singing.)

Song

Come, dance with me to Wild Flower Dell,
Fair maidens blithe and gay,
The graceful Queen of joyous spring
Begins her reign to-day.

To gladden little children dear
A wild flower pageant bright
Shall deck the fields and banks and bowers
To give young hearts delight.

(The Queen takes a moss-covered seat and the maidens group themselves on the grass at her feet and place their baskets of petals near her.)

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

Queen. The message from Old King Winter came at last and he and all his attendants are already on their way to the Northland. This spring the children shall have more flowers than ever—enough, I assure you, to satisfy them.

Merry Sunshine (dancing in and out). How happy I am Old King Winter left early this year.

Queen. Yes, Merry Sunshine. Skip over to South Breeze's cave and tell her we are here a little earlier than usual. Tell her she need have no fear of blustering North Wind.

(Merry Sunshine skips over to the cave and knocks gently on the door.)

And you, Silver Shower, call the little brook. I long to hear its gurgle once more.

(South Breeze comes out of the cave and with Merry Sunshine joins the others—while Silver Shower walks to the brook and waves her hands above it.)

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

South Breeze. Here I am! I feared that rude blusterer, North Wind, was still here. So long as he stays I dare not blow my warm breath.

(The Queen begins to arrange the baskets. A rustle is heard in the thicket. Queen and her maidens stop to listen. Then they go on with their work.)

Silver Shower (shivering). Do not speak of North Wind. The very thought of his icy breath makes me shiver. Oh!

Evening Dew. He's not half so bad as that mischievous Jack Frost. I'm really afraid of him.

Morning Mist. And so am I. He's always up to some trick. I remember last year—

Queen. Come, come, my maidens. Here are plenty of petals of all colors and plenty of work for your fingers to do. You may choose to make the kind of flowers you love best.

(Maidens gather around the Queen, who lets them choose.)

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

Merry Sunshine. Oh, daffodils for me, dear Queen. Daffodils with trumpets of pure gold. I'll cover the banks of the brook with them. And I shall make dandelions and buttercups—the children's own flowers—for the meadows.

(Queen gives each maiden the petals as they are chosen.)

Morning Mist. My choice is crocus flowers—of many colors—white and gold, violet and rich purple.

(Takes handful of various colors.)

Silver Shower. I shall make pink and white May flowers to cover the hedgerows.

(Chooses white and pink petals.)

Evening Dew. Violets for every nook in the dell. What a delight they are to the children!

(Takes violet petals.)

South Breeze. Wild hyacinth bells for shady groves; blue, white, pale pink, and violet.

(Chooses petals of all colors.)

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

(The handmaidens sing and fashion their blossoms. Nick Bluster, with his cheeks puffed out, and Jack Frost, dancing and carrying an icicle wand, slip out unseen from the thicket. The Queen and her maidens shiver and look frightened. Jack Frost skips about and touches each in the group with his icy wand. Nick Bluster, with a hop, skip, and jump, blows boisterously and scatters the petals in all directions.)

Queen (seeing Jack Frost and Nick Bluster, rises). What does this mean?

Handmaidens. It's Jack Frost. It's North Wind. Oh! Oh! Oh!

(They run about shivering. Jack Frost and Nick Bluster run back into the thicket.)

Queen. So it is—Jack Frost and North Wind—rude fellows. Come, come, my maidens. Let's away. Old King Winter has not taken all his saucy attendants away with him. There shall be *no* spring this year! Away! Away!

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

South Breeze. I beg your Majesty come to my cave. The rude fellows can do you no harm there.

Queen. Quite true, South Breeze. We shall go to South Breeze's cave. There shall be *no* spring this year.

(Queen and her attendants run into the cave of South Breeze. Jack Frost and Nick Bluster step quietly out of the thicket and look anxiously at the cave.)

Jack Frost. Nick Bluster, did you hear what the Queen said? There'll be *no* spring this year!

Nick Bluster. I don't think she meant it, Jack.

Jack Frost. Oh, yes, she did! No spring this year. And the brook is already beginning to gurgle over the pebbles, and I hear that the birds are on their way. You know Old King Winter sent his message to the Queen of Spring.

Nick Bluster. What shall we do?

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

Jack Frost. It's all your fault, Nick. It was your idea to play this trick and now you must think of a way out of the trouble.

Nick Bluster. Let's slip away to the Northland and keep it all a secret.

Jack Frost. Such an idea! Old King Winter never leaves until he is quite sure Lady Spring is willing and ready to take his place. He'll suspect us, Nick, if there is no spring. It's your fault.

Nick Bluster. But I did it just for fun, Jack. We must make the Queen come out of that cave some way. Help me to think of a plan.

Jack Frost. I don't know what you can do, for I've heard it said that she's very stubborn if she's offended. Nick Bluster, you'll have to mend your ways. You're entirely too mischievous.

Nick Bluster. Jack Frost, you like a bit of fun as much as I do. Please help me out. You're a clever fellow. If we could once get the Queen out of that cave all would be well.

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

Jack Frost. Let me think—I have it. Nick, they say the Spring Queen is very proud of her grace. In fact, she boasts that no one can match her in beauty. Listen, Nick. From the bank of this brook which flows near the cave of South Breeze I'll pretend to greet a water nymph who dwells in the depth of the brook. I'll praise her beauty and grace. I'll tell her she's as beautiful as our Queen of Spring. I'll say she is *more* beautiful than our Queen of Spring. I'll beg her to come and be Queen in place of my Lady Spring.

Nick Bluster. Suppose the nymph won't come?

Jack Frost. Of course she won't come, stupid. She won't even show her face to me! But don't you see that it will make the Queen envious and she'll wish to see this nymph. When the Queen comes out of the cave—

Nick Bluster. Oh, I see! Ha! ha! ha!

Jack Frost. Stay here a moment, Nick. (*Jack Frost slips over to the bank of the brook. He leans over, looks into the water, and calls back to Nick Bluster.*) Nick Bluster, Nick Blus-

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

ter, *do* come here and see the most *beautiful* sight in the whole world!

Nick Bluster. What is it, Jack?

Jack Frost (pointing). Look, Nick! In this brook is a water nymph, the loveliest creature I've ever seen. She wears a garland of wild flowers in her bright hair and her robe is made of lacy ferns. She is beautiful enough to be the Queen of Spring. She is more beautiful than our own lovely Queen!

Nick Bluster. How gracious she looks! What a lovely coronet of flowers!

Jack Frost. She *is* the Queen of Spring. Perhaps we were deceived. So there *will* be spring this year. Come, I'm ready to join Old King Winter now.

Nick Bluster. So am I. Come.

(They slip into the thicket. The Queen of Spring peeps out of the cave.)

Queen of Spring. What did those clowns say? A water nymph lovely enough to be Queen of Spring?

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

Merry Sunshine. Let us slip over to the brook
and see if she is as beautiful as your Majesty.
I don't believe it.

Queen. Come. We'll all go quickly and look
and then we'll slip back into the cave.

*(Queen goes to the brook and looks in.
She sees her own reflection, then calls to her
handmaidens to come.)*

Handmaidens (anxiously). What does your
Majesty see?

Queen. Alas! A beautiful nymph! Look!
(Handmaidens look into the brook.)

First Handmaiden. 'Tis your Majesty's own
image.

Second Handmaiden. Jack Frost and North
Wind have tricked us again.

Third Handmaiden. I see! I see their plan!
It was to bring your Majesty out of the cave.

*(While they are talking Jack Frost and
Nick Bluster slip over to the cave and stand*

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

in the entrance. The Queen and her attendants turn to go toward the cave.)

Nick Bluster. O Queen of Spring, we humbly beg your pardon. It is, indeed, your own sweet image you see in the brook.

Jack Frost. Forgive me, gracious Queen. It was all a little joke. We promise never again to meddle with your plan. Away to the North we'll hurry, if you will stay and weave your garlands. For the children's sake, will you forgive us?

Queen. What say my handmaidens?

Handmaidens. For the children's sake, let us stay.

(Jack Frost and Nick Bluster hurry away. Maidens circle and dance around the Queen.)

Song

To gladden little children dear,
A wild flower pageant bright,
Shall deck the fields and banks and bowers,
To give young hearts delight.

CICELY AND THE BEARS

TIME: *Long, long ago*

PLACE: SCENE I. *An old town. Market place*

SCENE II. *A knight's castle*

SCENE III. *Hall in knight's castle*

CHARACTERS:

<i>Sir Nicholas Hildebrand</i>	<i>First Citizen</i>
<i>Cicely</i>	<i>Second Citizen</i>
<i>Bellman</i>	<i>First Dame</i>
<i>Porter</i>	<i>Second Dame</i>
<i>First Bear</i>	<i>First maiden</i>
<i>Second Bear</i>	<i>Second maiden</i>

Dames, maidens, pages, attendants.

PLOT OF THE PLAY

Sir Nicholas Hildebrand, a knight, offers his hand in marriage to the fairest maiden in the land. The rich dames of the village take their daughters to a ball given by the knight in the castle. Cicely, a beggar girl, creeps in unnoticed. During the feast two bears walk upright into the hall and cause fear and confusion among the guests, who run and hide. Cicely steps bravely forth and serves the shaggy strangers. Sir Hildebrand chooses the beggar maiden for his bride.

CICELY AND THE BEARS

SCENE I

A busy market place in an old town. Men and women and maidens are laughing, chattering, and buying fruit, vegetables, etc. The market people call out the articles they have for sale. The following merry cries are heard: "Who'll buy my cherries?" "Delicious cherries rich and rare!" "Crisp lettuce!" "Carrots and onions!" "Vegetables of all kinds!" Suddenly the clatter stops. The people listen. The sound Ding dong! Ding dong! can be heard, faintly at first, then louder, Ding dong! Ding dong!

First Citizen. The bellman is ringing in a neighboring square. No doubt he has rare news for all. Stop! Listen! See, there he comes.

(All the people peer in the direction pointed out by First Citizen.)

CICELY AND THE BEARS

First Dame. Hush! Sh! Do stop your prattling! See, he's coming this way. Let us hear him.

Second Dame. What is it he says? Come, be quiet! We must hear his news.

(Nearer and nearer comes the Bellman and the ringing sound, Ding, dong! Ding, dong! Cicely, a little flower girl, carrying a tray of blossoms, enters.)

Cicely (sings).

Sweet violets and roses rare,
Now, who'll buy my flowers fair?

Second Citizen. Make way there, girl, and stop your singing. We want to hear the news the bellman brings.

First Dame. See how the people are following him. And how they speed along. What a clatter to be sure!

Second Dame. See his beautiful clothes of blue velvet trimmed with rich gold lace! Hark! What does he say? No doubt it is rare news.

(Bellman comes into view.)

CICELY AND THE BEARS

First Citizen. Quiet! Quiet! I say! Sh!

Bellman.

O, yez! O, yez! Ding, dong, ding, dong!
Ding dong! Ding dong! Hear one and all,
The brave Sir Nicholas Hildebrand
Has just returned from the Holy Land.
Ding dong! Ding dong! hear one and all!

Citizens. What is it he says about Sir Nicholas
Hildebrand? He just returned—

All. Hush! Listen!

Bellman.

The brave Sir Nicholas Hildebrand
Is the richest knight in all the land.

First Dame. I'm sure we all know that.

Second Dame. Have you no *news* for us, sir?

Bellman.

Hear yez! Hear yez! Ding dong! Ding dong!
The knight, Sir Nicholas Hildebrand,
Has just returned from the Holy Land,
And freely offers his heart and hand!

*Dames and Maidens (crowd about the Bellman
and cry out).* What is it you say about his
heart and hand?

CICELY AND THE BEARS

Second Dame. Come, sir, to *whom* does he offer his heart and hand? Do explain yourself. Tell us plainly your meaning.

All. We command you, sir, to tell us the *news*.

Bellman.

The bravest knight, Sir Hildebrand,
Now freely offers his heart and hand
To the *fairest maid* in all the land!

First Dame (to second). Didst hear? Sir Hildebrand will marry the fairest maid in all the land! Tell us again, Bellman. Again!

Bellman.

O, yez! Ding dong! ye shall understand,
That brave Sir Nicholas Hildebrand
Invites all ladies in the land
To feast with him in the castle strong.

Citizens, Dames, Maidens. When, Bellman?
Tell us when!

Bellman. This day at three. Ding dong! ding dong!

Cicely (who has been crowded away, pushes for-

CICELY AND THE BEARS

ward and cries out). Please, Bellman, tell me, does the knight invite everybody? Does he want rich and poor to come to this feast?

(Dames and maidens scoff at Cicely.)

First Maiden. What do you mean? Did you not hear the bellman say that Sir Nicholas Hildebrand invites the *ladies* of the land to feast with him in his castle?

Second Dame. Such impudence! The knight would not invite beggars to the castle. A beggar maid of low degree should know better than to ask such questions.

First Dame. Dear Bellman, please tell us a little more about this wonderful news. Do not hasten away, I beg you.

Second Maiden. Sir, shall we wear our brightest and best clothes? Shall we dress in our gayest colors?

Bellman.

O yez! Ding ding! I must away.
Wear brightest clothes, wear colors gay!

CICELY AND THE BEARS

First Dame. Come, maidens! There is no time to waste. Come! You must dress in gayest robes; powder your hair with gold dust, but I trust not one of you will paint your cheeks.

Maidens. Never—never—no, no.

Second Dame. Hurry along—we've little enough time. What a joyous day this is! Come, let us make ready for the feast.

Bellman (strolls away singing).

Haste yez, haste yez! Ding dong, Ding dong!
I troll the news in happy song.
The brave Sir Nicholas Hildebrand
Has just returned from the Holy Land!
He offers now his heart and hand
To the fairest maid in all the land!

First Dame.

Come all ye maids who would be wives
And dress within an inch of your lives.

Bellman (calls back to the people). A gallant knight is Sir Hildebrand.

Dames and Maidens. A gallant knight he is,

CICELY AND THE BEARS

indeed. *We understand* you now, dear Bellman.

SCENE II

At the entrance gate of Sir Hildebrand's castle stands a porter. Gayly dressed dames and maidens come up to the gate. They are laughing and talking merrily. Cicely stands on the corner of the street. She looks longingly at the richly dressed, happy throng. As the maids and dames pass they look scornfully at her.

Porter (sings in a loud voice).

Come yez, come yez! this way, this way
To attend the feast, all ladies gay.
This way to feast in the castle strong
The clock strikes three! Ding dong! Ding
dong!

To-day Sir Nicholas Hildebrand
Most freely offers his heart and hand
To the fairest maid in all the land.
This way to feast in the castle strong
The clock strikes three! Ding dong! Ding
dong!

CICELY AND THE BEARS

(The dames and maids bow pleasantly to the porter as they pass in.)

First Dame. This is indeed a joyous day. We have come to feast with the brave Sir Nicholas, who, they say, is the richest knight in all the land.

Second Dame. See how beautifully our maids are dressed. A wonderful sight, are they not?

First Maid. See our lovely ribbons! Are not the colors rich and rare?

Porter (nodding). A merry sight, I do declare.

Second Maid. Dear porter, tell us—does Sir Nicholas love gay colors? I hope so, for our frocks are as bright as a bed of flowers. Dost thou know the knight's favorite color? I prithee, tell me.

(Porter whispers to her; she nods gayly and runs on.)

Porter (sings again).

This way, this way, to the castle strong
All dames and maids, ding dong, ding dong.
The brave Sir Nicholas Hildebrand

CICELY AND THE BEARS

Now freely offers his heart and hand
To the fairest maid in all the land.

Dames and Maids. Oh, sir, you're not hard to understand!

(Cicely slips nearer the castle gate but stops and draws back because the dames and maidens scoff at her.)

Porter.

Who is this maid with curly hair?
Her frock is torn but her face is fair.

Maiden. She's a beggar, sir. She has no business here.

First Dame. See that she doesn't slip through the castle gate, good porter. What a shaggy-pate she has to be sure.

Second Dame. Stand aside, beggar maid—I fear we're late.

Troop of Dames and Maids (sing as they go toward the castle).

The brave Sir Nicholas Hildebrand
Invites the ladies of the land

CICELY AND THE BEARS

To feast with him in the castle strong
This day at three, ding dong, ding dong.

He freely offers his heart and hand
To the fairest maid in all the land.
We've decked ourselves in colors gay
To feast with him this joyous day.

Now all the maids who would be wives
Are dressed within an inch of their lives.
Tra la, tra la, ding dong, ding dong!
We go to the feast in the castle strong.

*(Cicely weeps as she watches the gay throng
and hears the merry music. She walks
slowly up to the Porter after all have passed
into the gate.)*

Cicely. Kind sir, I should like to see the feast.
Perhaps I could slip in and not be noticed.
The bellman in the market place declared that
the good knight wished *all* the maidens in the
land to feast with him.

(Porter looks at her dress and shoes.)

Cicely. I know my frock is torn and my shoes
are patched, but, oh, kind sir, please let me in.

CICELY AND THE BEARS

Porter.

'Tis true your frock is old and torn;
Your tear-stained face is most forlorn.
But dry your tears, dear Shaggy-pate,
And hasten in—I fear you're late.
I'm sure Sir Nicholas Hildebrand
Wished all the maidens in the land
To feast with him in the castle strong.

(Sounds from the palace reach Cicely's ears.)

Cicely. Thank you, kind porter. Thank you, sir. Hear the clang of the flagons and the chink of the platters. I'm late, sir, but no one will notice Shaggy-pate.

Porter.

Pass quickly on to the castle strong.
Haste yez! Haste yez! Ding dong! Ding
dong!

SCENE III

A large hall in the castle of Sir Nicholas Hildebrand. Guests are laughing and talking and looking now and then toward the door,

CICELY AND THE BEARS

expecting to see the knight enter. On a long table are sweets, cakes, cherries, etc. Pages pass the refreshments. Merry music is playing. Cicely creeps in unnoticed and slips behind a curtain. Trumpets blow. Heralds announce the coming of the knight. Sir Nicholas Hildebrand, the bravest of knights, now comes. Maidens are very much flurried. The dames help them to arrange their hair ribbons, frocks, etc. All watch the entrance eagerly. Cicely peeps out from the tapestry, where she is hiding. A stately march is played. Sir Nicholas Hildebrand, followed by a number of attendants and pages, marches into the hall. He walks to the raised platform, where a large canopied seat is arranged. He stands up before his guests and looks at the throng of eager faces.

Sir Hildebrand.

A joyous greeting to one and all;
Most hearty welcome to my hall.
Let merry music make a din,
Flute and cymbals and culvarin!
Welcome, dames and maidens fair;

CICELY AND THE BEARS

Such youth and grace and beauty rare
Is a joy to see, I do declare!
Now feast and dance to music gay;
What knight e'er viewed such fair array?
Let joy resound through the castle strong;
My choice of a bride ye shall know 'ere long.
A joyous cheer to one and all;
A hearty welcome to my hall!

(Dames and maidens bow to him as he takes his chair. During this speech Cicely slips out from her hiding place and stands spell-bound.)

Cicely (to herself). Brave Sir Nicholas Hildebrand is the noblest knight in all the world. Happy, happy the maid will be whom he chooses for a bride. Oh, how ragged my clothes are! I cannot even appear before him in my torn shoes and ugly frock.

(She bursts into sobs and slips back of the curtain. The dames and maidens start and look at the tapestry. Some of them catch sight of her.)

First Dame. Who is spoiling the feast? I do

CICELY AND THE BEARS

believe that curly-headed beggar girl has slipped into the hall!

Second Dame. She's there behind the curtain. Turn her out! (*To an attendant.*) There's a simpering beggar hiding behind the tapestry curtain. Put her out of the hall. What does the shaggy-head mean?

(A low growl startles all the guests. A roar alarms them. The growling and roaring grow louder and louder. There is general confusion. Dames and maidens huddle together with cries of fear. Cicely comes into view and stands quietly looking toward the entrance. Into the hall on their hinder legs walk two shaggy bears. Dames and maidens flee in all directions. They scream and scramble; some jump behind chairs, others behind the tapestry; a few creep under the great table.)

Sir Nicholas Hildebrand (rises). By my faith, good friends, what is the matter? What does all this fright mean? Why do you jump about and creep under the table? Why do

CICELY AND THE BEARS

maidens tear their hair and scream and screech in such a hideous way, I beseech you? Not the bears, I hope?

(The bears march upright all around the room. They nod welcome to the frightened guests. The cries of fear continue. Each one tries to get as far as possible away from the shaggy animals. When they come to Cicely, the bears stop and stare at her; then they look at each other and nod their heads. They step closer, examine her tow-sled head very curiously; they compare it with their own shaggy coats and nod to each other.)

Bears.

Because your hair hangs wild and free
Related to us, Miss, you must be.
Will you serve us, maid of low degree?

(Bears glance at the refreshments on the table. Cicely walks gracefully and fearlessly to the table, and heaps up two golden plates with ripe cherries. She carries them to the Bears.)



Cicely heaps up two golden plates with ripe cherries and carries them to the Bears.

CICELY AND THE BEARS

Cicely.

Welcome to you, and to you, Mr. Bear.
Will you have a *chair*? Will *you* have a chair?
This is an honor, I do declare.

(Bears bow, take the plates, sit down, and feast on the cherries. Sir Hildebrand, who has been watching Cicely very admiringly, now rises and walks toward her.)

Sir Hildebrand. Tell me, who is the maid of low degree? How graceful she is! 'Tis a joy to see such beauty and courage. May I ask your name, fair maiden?

Cicely. I am a beggar girl, Sir Hildebrand. My name is Cicely and I came to see the bravest knight in all the land. Forgive me, sir. I meant no harm by coming to the feast. I told the porter I would slip in unnoticed.

(Bears nod approval. Dames and maidens stand forth and look at Cicely in amazement.)

Sir Hildebrand.

Welcome, fair maid, may I take your hand?
Come, let us dance a saraband!

CICELY AND THE BEARS *

Your hair is rough as a parlor broom.
Let's swing and swirl around the room.
To dance with thee, O maiden fair,
Is the *greatest* honor, I do declare.

(He leads Cicely to the middle of the hall.)

Sir Hildebrand.

A surprise to you all, I may presume?
No matter who this maid may be,
Ladies! Here is the *bride* for me!

(Sir Hildebrand kisses Cicely. The music plays and they dance together. In a little while the guests join in the revelry and sing.)

Dames and Maidens.

Behold Sir Nicholas Hildebrand,
Who freely offers his heart and hand
To the fairest maid in all the land.

Sir Hildebrand.

No matter who this maid may be;
A curly-headed bride for me!

(Guests, Sir Hildebrand, Cicely, Bears sing and dance out of the hall.)

All.

Now sing and cheer, all maidens fair;

CICELY AND THE BEARS

Cheer for the Bears with shaggy hair.
Once more we'll cheer, if you will wait,
For every girl with a curly pate.
Sing, "Bear's grease, curling irons to sell!"
Sing, "Comb and brush and tortoise shell!"
Oh, yes! "Ding dong! the Crier and Bell!"
And—"Isn't this a pretty tale to tell?"



THE HAPPY BEGGAR

TIME: *Present*

PLACE: *The King's room*

CHARACTERS

King

Nurse

Queen

Page

Court Physician

King's Valet

First Assistant

A Happy Beggar

Wise Man

Attendants

PLOT OF THE PLAY

A King who imagines himself sick is told by a wise man that his Majesty will be well if he sleeps one night in the shirt of a happy man. The wise man finds a beggar who says he is perfectly happy. The beggar is brought before the King. When his Majesty offers money for the privilege of wearing for one night the beggar's shirt, the beggar laughingly declares he has no shirt to his back. The King turns to the wise man and says, "Thou hast taught the King a lesson which he is not likely to forget."

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

SCENE I: *Room in King's palace. King is propped up in a chair. He has just finished his breakfast. Nurse and valet are busy trying to make him comfortable.*

King (sighing, to Nurse). This long illness is very hard to bear.

(Queen enters.)

Queen. I trust your Majesty is better this morning.

King. Not at all. When is this new physician to come?

Queen. At ten o'clock. It is almost time for him to be here.

King. I hope he is as wise as he is reported to be.

Nurse. Your Majesty, it is time for your medicine.

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

King (in a loud voice). Take it away. I'll have no more of it. The Court Physician has lost his skill. Nothing he has prescribed has done me one whit of good. Take it away. (*To the Queen.*) Is it not strange that these doctors cannot cure me?

Queen. It is, indeed. Your Majesty's illness has puzzled the Court Physician, and his twenty-five assistants. Each one says he has done all in his power to bring you back to health.

King. I'm out of patience with all of them. A set of blockheads they are. And now the Court Physician begs to put my case into the hands of a friend of his. If this stranger who is called a wise man does not cure me, I'll have him put into a dungeon. The Court Physician and his twenty-five assistants shall be severely punished, too.

Nurse. Pardon me, gracious Sire, but you must keep calm. The Court Physician—

King. Don't speak his name. (*To Valet.*) Take away this tray.

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

Valet. May I ask what your Majesty wishes for luncheon?

King. Of course you may not ask such a question. Tell the cook not to send me fricasseed chicken again for breakfast. I've had it twice within the last month. It is his business to surprise me with fresh dainties at each meal. Bring me a good luncheon at twelve o'clock. In the meantime, I'll try to keep up my strength, by eating a few dishes of frozen cream.

(Valet goes out carrying a large tray of empty dishes.)

Queen. I'm most anxious to learn what the new physician thinks of your case. He is almost due.

(Page enters.)

Page. The Court Physician begs me to announce to your Majesty that his friend, the Wise Man, has reached the palace and that they wait your commands.

King. They may enter. *(Page bows and with-*

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

draws. Court Physician and Wise Man enter and bow to the King. To Court Physician.)
Hast thou any proof that this stranger is wise enough to take my case in hand?

Court Physician. Your Majesty, he comes from the Far East where his wisdom is well known. I beg your Majesty to let him examine—

King. What! Examine me? I'm tired of these tedious examinations.

Queen. Gracious King, I beg of you to permit the Wise Man to have an opportunity to give his advice.

King. If he fails to cure me, I'll shut him up in a dungeon. (*To Court Physician.*) And thou shalt share his fate. (*To Wise Man.*) What hast thou to say?

Wise Man. I believe I can cure your Majesty.

King. Ha! Proceed then with the examination.

Wise Man. With your Majesty's permission,

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

I'll examine the heart first. (*Wise Man examines King's chest, then takes his pulse.*)

May I beg to see your royal tongue? (*King puts out his tongue.*)

Heart action—strong.

Circulation—excellent.

Blood pressure—normal.

Not one degree of fever.

The case is very obscure. Will your Majesty describe to me your suffering?

King. What! Am I to be my own doctor?
'Tis exactly the way with a physician. He expects the patient to know more about the case than himself.

Wise Man. I believe your Majesty can help me if you'll describe your feelings.

King. I've no ambition—no—no—joy in anything. My heart is as heavy as lead all the time. In truth life is a great burden to me.

Wise Man. Allow me to ask if you sleep well?

King. I can't bother with any more questions. Let the Queen or the nurse answer you.

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

Nurse. I am happy to say his Majesty sleeps well.

Court Physician. Do you not see that we have a difficult case to cure?

Wise Man (shaking his head). Most difficult. (To *Queen.*) Will your Majesty tell me about the King's appetite?

Queen. I believe his royal appetite is fairly good. Nurse, what was brought for his Majesty's breakfast this morning?

Nurse. The royal cook sent a dish of apricots, grapes, and pomegranates, a Spanish melon, pancakes and honey, rolls and jelly, a fricasseed chicken, a broiled fish, and a pot of chocolate.

King. The royal cook is a villain, and I'll have his head cut off if he doesn't send me better meals. Everything named by the nurse, he has sent me twice within the last month. He'd better see to it that I have more variety.

Wise Man. Variety is the best sauce for a royal appetite.

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

King. Come, what hast thou to say about my illness?

Wise Man. I can cure the King.

King. Beware! I'll bear no more disappointments. Watch thy words.

Wise Man. I can cure the King.

Queen. That will give us great happiness.

Wise Man. Hear me patiently, O King. I can cure your Majesty, if you will promise to take my advice seriously and carry out my orders to the letter.

(All implore the King.)

Court Physician. Your Majesty, I implore you to give your promise.

Nurse. May it please your Majesty, let the Wise Man try to cure you.

Queen. Gracious Sire, for my sake, give your consent.

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

King (deliberately). Well, I promise to follow his directions. But let him beware if he fail.

Wise Man. I shall not fail.

King. Give the advice without further delay. I'm out of patience.

Wise Man.

The King will be well
If he sleeps one night
In the shirt of a happy man.

King. Away with thy riddles. Be plain. What dost thou mean?

Wise Man.

The King will be well
If he sleeps one night
In the shirt of a happy man.

King. Then into thy hands I put the task of finding the happy man.

Wise Man. Your Majesty must make the request for the shirt yourself.

King. That will not be difficult. Bring a per-

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

fectly happy man here to me. He'll not refuse a royal demand.

Wise Man. May I have help in this difficult search for a happy man, your Majesty?

King. The Court Physician and his twenty-five assistant doctors may help. In two weeks I'll hear a report. Begin the search immediately—the search for a happy man.

SCENE II

TIME: *Two weeks later*

PLACE: *Same as Scene I*

(The King is seated in a large invalid chair.)

King. These pillows are most uncomfortable. Nurse, rearrange them.

(Queen enters carrying a bouquet of roses and orchids.)

Queen. I hope your Majesty rested well last

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

night. See these beautiful orchids. The royal gardener is very proud of them.

King. Their odor is most unpleasant.

Nurse. Shall I take them away, your Majesty?

Queen. Put them on the window-sill. Are not the searchers for a truly happy man to report soon?

Nurse. They are to come to-day.

(Page enters.)

Page. Your Majesty, the Wise Man is on his way to the palace. The Court Physician and several of his assistants are ready to report.

King. Bid them enter. Stay! I'll see only one at a time.

(Enter First Assistant)

Didst thou find a happy man?

First Assistant. Alas, O King!

King. Make thy report brief.

First Assistant. On the first day of my journey

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

I visited a farmer whose broad acres promised a rich harvest. I hastened to put the question: "Art thou not a truly happy man?" But he groaned and shook his head. "My cares are many," he said. "Some say the locusts are due this year. They will ruin my crops. I cannot rest night or day thinking about the loss I shall suffer if they come. Happy? I don't know a moment's peace." Then I traveled until I came to a large seaport where merchants carry on a very prosperous business. In a wonderful palace overlooking the sea lives the richest trader in the place. He had just doubled his wealth, so I hastened to see him. But I found he was too ill to be seen. His servant said he had worn himself out planning how to keep the great wealth he had gained—I next—

King. Stop—that is enough—I shall hear no other assistants. Thou art banished for failing to find a happy man. Tell the Court Physician to enter. (*Court Physician enters.*) Didst thou succeed in thy quest?

Court Physician. I failed to find a truly happy man, O King.

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

King. Give thy report as quickly as possible.

Court Physician. I traveled night and day until I came to the kingdom which joins yours. The Emperor had just returned from a war. All the people of his capitol were rejoicing over the great victory won by the King. I hastened to see his Majesty, but when I greeted him with the words, "O happy King," he exclaimed, "What meanest thou? I'm most miserable! Knowest thou I've won only *half* a kingdom!"

King. What! Thou thought to find true happiness in a King? Thou shalt be cast into a dungeon for thy stupidity! Begone.

(When the Court Physician goes out the King hears a rollicking song just outside.)

Old Song

Of all the occupations
A beggar's is the best,
For whenever he's a-weary
He can lay him down and rest.

I fear no plots against me,
I live in open cell;

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

Then who would be a king, lads,
When the beggar lives so well?

King. What does this mean? Who sings so
gayly?

Queen. Some one whose heart is light. Let us
hope a happy man is found.

(Page enters)

Page. Your Majesty, the Wise Man begs to see
you.

King. He may come in. *(Wise Man enters.)*
What report hast thou to make?

Wise Man. I've done my part, O King. . I have
found a *happy man!*

Queen. At last the King will be cured!

King. Art thou sure? Give thy report.

Wise Man. I found him lying on the grass near
a village gate. He was laughing, whistling,
and singing with hearty cheer. When I drew
near, I asked this jolly beggar if he were truly

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

happy. His answer was, "In the wide world, you'll find no happier soul than I."

King. A jolly beggar sayest thou? I'm in no mood for jest. Bring him before me.

(The beggar, humming and laughing, is brought before the king.)

King. If thy looks speak truly, thou art a *happy man*.

Beggar. There's not a happier man in your kingdom, your Majesty.

King. The King has a favor to ask of thee.

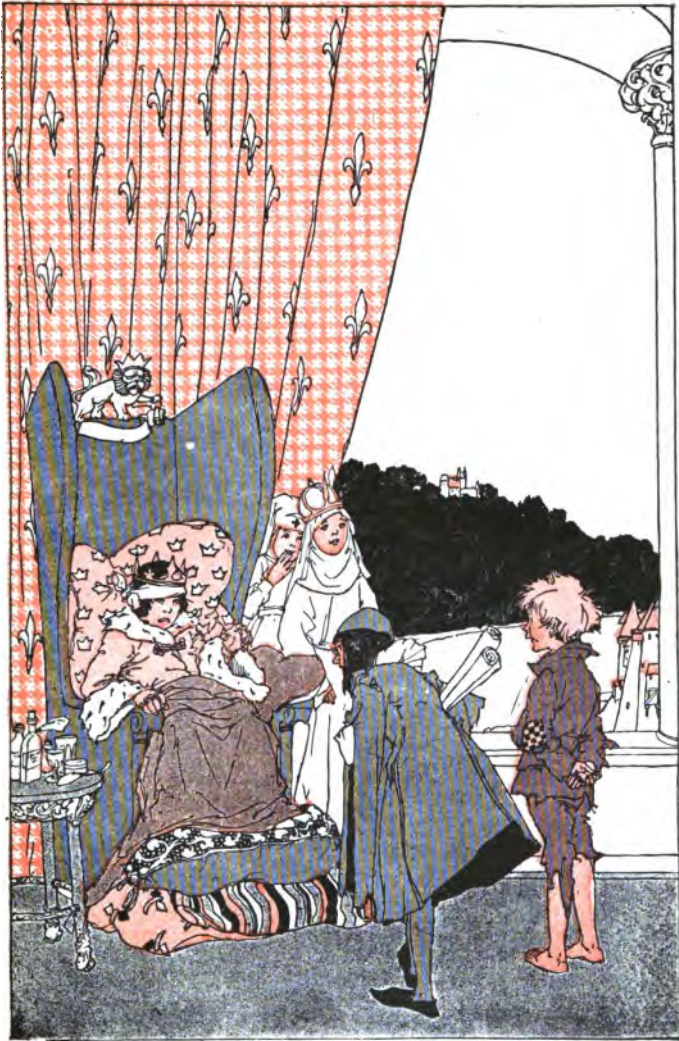
Beggar. A favor, your Majesty?

King. I will give thee one hundred ducats, my friend, for the loan of thy shirt to-night.

Beggar (bursts into hearty laugh). How gladly I'd lend it, O King, but I haven't a shirt to my back.

(All look astonished at the Wise Man.)

King. With no roof but the sky, no food but a



The Beggar, humming and laughing, is brought before the King.

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

crust, and no shirt to thy back, thou art the
happiest of men?

Beggar (singing).

Of all the occupations
A beggar's is the best,
For whenever he's a-weary
He can lay him down and rest.

I fear no plots against me,
I live in open cell;
Then who would be a king, lads,
When the beggar lives so well?

King (to Wise Man). Take my pardon to those
who helped in the search. Thou hast taught
the king a lesson which he is not likely to for-
get.

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

TIME: *Early spring*

PLACE: *Near a pond in the meadow*

CHARACTERS:

Bobby, a mischievous boy

Mrs. Bufo

Professor Rana

Mr. Bull-frog

Many other frogs and toads

PLOT OF THE PLAY

Bobby is lying on a hillock near a pond. He is drowsily looking at the white clouds drifting across a deep blue sky. Presently, a number of frogs and toads hop into view and take places on a mossy log. The leader, Professor Rana, a large green frog wearing goggles on his nose, hops up to Bobby and examines him. Suddenly, Bobby feels perfectly helpless and he hears voices. In a little while he discovers that Professor Rana is to give a lecture on the human tadpole and Bobby is to serve as a specimen. The Professor in his lecture points out how useless and cruel boys are, and how helpful to man frogs and toads are. Finally, Bobby is allowed to plead his own case. After promising to mend his ways and in the future to treat frogs and toads kindly, Bobby is freed. He jumps to his feet, sees the frogs and toads hopping away and hears a warning voice telling him to remember what has been said.

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

Professor Rana. This is a good specimen. See how stout and strong he looks.

Mrs. Bufo. Professor Rana, you are indeed very fortunate to find such a specimen.

Bobby (sits up, rubs his eyes). Where am I? Oh yes! I remember now. I came to the pond to have a little fun. Why, who are you?

(Frogs and toads take no notice of Bobby's question. He slowly lies down again.)

One Frog. He no doubt knew that this is the first week of spring.

Another Frog. Oh yes! And he knew well enough that it is the time when we make a visit to the pond to lay our eggs.

Another Frog. Well, he's trapped this time.

All together. He is, indeed!

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE,

(A bull-frog hops up to Bobby and carefully examines his legs and arms.)

Bull-frog. A very good specimen. He has done plenty of mischief in his day.

Bobby (shivers from fright). "In his day!" Why, what does it all mean? I can hardly move. Some strange spell holds me fast.

Mrs. Bufo (addressing the frogs and toads on the log). I believe we all agree that this is one of the species. Come, are we ready to hear Professor Rana lecture?

Frogs and Toads. All ready.

(Other frogs and toads hop into view. They group themselves around Bobby. The Professor draws out a roll of manuscript.)

Toad (on Bobby's left). I'm very sleepy. I laid more than eight thousand eggs in the pond last night, and I have a long journey before me.

Another Toad. Yes, yes. But you must stay

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

and hear this lecture. We may never have such a chance again.

All the Frogs and Toads. Yes, indeed. Let every one stay and hear the lecture.

Professor Rana (adjusts his goggles, unrolls his manuscript, and begins). Ladies and gentlemen, this is a specimen of creature known to us as the human tadpole. You will kindly observe his long legs. (*Points with a stick to Bobby's legs.*) These were doubtless given to him for the purpose of protection. Being possessed of a most mischievous spirit, this species is always getting into difficulties and would probably become extinct if it had not the power to run away.

(*Frogs and toads nod.*)

Bobby (frowning). Nonsense!

Professor Rana. Otherwise he is not at all adapted to his surroundings. Observe how carefully we are dressed for our own safety. We frogs have the green and brown tints of our home by the water-side. The toads look

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

like lumps of dirt so that they may not be too readily snapped up by snakes and birds of prey. But the Boy—to call him by his scientific name—has no such protection. Look at this red shirt and these white trousers and this hat as big as a trout pool! Could anything be more ridiculous? Even a giraffe does not look as absurd as this.

(Bobby looks angry and confused. He tries to speak but cannot.)

Professor (continues). Now as far as we have been able to learn, the human tadpole is absolutely useless. We are, therefore, doing no harm in experimenting upon this specimen. There are plenty of them and this one will not be a serious loss.

Bobby (screams out and startles the whole company). Stop! Tell me what you are going to do with me.

Professor Rana (speaks severely). You will be so kind as to lie still. At present you are only a specimen.

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

(Bobby tries to move but finds he can only wriggle a little.)

Professor (continues). Not only is the Boy entirely useless, but he is often what we may call a pest, even to his own kind. He is endured in the world for what he may become when he is full-grown, and even then he is sometimes disappointing. You are familiar with many of his objectionable ways toward the animal world, but I am sure you would be surprised if you knew what a care and trouble he frequently is to his own people. He can be trusted to do few kinds of work. It is difficult to keep him clean. He doesn't know how to get his own dinner. He likes to make weaker things miserable. He likes fishing and he loves a gun; he steals birds' eggs; he catches butterflies and puts them on pins; he stones squirrels; he teases his little sisters.

Bull-frog (angrily). Why isn't the species *exter-min-a-ted*?

All Frogs and Toads. Why not, Professor Rana? Come, give us the reason.

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

Mrs. Bufo (timidly). Pardon me, my friends. I think you are a little unjust, Professor. I have known boys who are *comparatively* harmless.

(Shaking of heads among the company.)

Professor (politely turning to Mrs. Bufo). There may be a few, Mrs. Bufo, but as a class they may fairly be set down as of very doubtful value. My friends, with your permission, I'll let the specimen speak for himself.

Frogs and Toads. Let him speak, Professor. We'll hear what he has to say for himself.

Professor Rana. Tadpole, have I made any false statements so far?

Bobby. We *do* work. We go to school every day.

Frogs and Toads. Does he call *that* work? Ha! ha! ha!

Professor Rana. What a help going to school must be to your parents and the world at large!

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

Bull-frog. Professor, tell him how useful even our smallest tadpoles are.

Professor Rana. Without our tadpoles this pond would no longer be beautiful, but foul and ill-smelling. They eat the tiny plants that grow in the mud and thus keep the pond sweet and clean.

Another Frog. Please tell him what we do when we are grown up.

Professor Rana. Modesty forbids me to praise ourselves so much. But I'll ask the Boy one question. Sir, do you know how much one toad is worth to mankind?

Bobby. No-o. About two cents, I guess.

All Frogs and Toads. Two cents!—Hear him! What ignorance! And he goes to school every day!

Professor Rana. One toad is worth twenty dollars a year, as estimated by the Department of Agriculture. What do you think of that?

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

Bobby. I should like to know how one toad is worth twenty dollars a year.

Professor Rana (looking over his goggles).
What are the greatest enemies of man?

Bobby. Tigers—or—or—wolves.

Professor Rana. Wrong! Insects. Insects destroy property in this country to the amount of four million dollars annually. Insects destroy the crops upon which man depends for his food.

Bull-frog. Going to school hasn't made him very wise, has it?

Professor (continues). Toads are insect destroyers. That's their business. If the states only knew enough to make use of them, millions of dollars might be saved every year.

Bull-frog. Professor Rana, do you think the human animal is as clever as it might be when it allows such numbers of our family to be destroyed?

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

Mrs. Bufo. It is a shame. We keep out of the way as much as we can; we eat every kind of troublesome worm and insect—the cut-worm, canker-worm, tent caterpillar, army-worm, rose-beetle, and the common house-fly; we ask for no wages or food or care—and what do we get in return? Not even protection and common kindness. If we had places where we could live in safety, who can tell the amount of good we might do? Yet I would not have this poor boy hurt if a word of mine could help him.

Professor Rana. This is a scientific meeting, Mrs. Bufo. Benevolent sentiments are quite out of place. We will now proceed to notice the delicate nervous system of the creature. Come closer, my assistants, if you please. (*A few toads hop close to Bobby.*)

Bobby. Nervous system, indeed! Boys don't have such silly things as nerves.

(*Bobby calls out: "Oh, oh!" He feels tiny pricks all over his body.*)

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

Professor. That will do. Now pull his hair, please. (*Assistants pull Bobby's hair.*)

Bobby. Oh, don't, don't! That hurts! (*He can hardly keep from crying.*)

Professor. That will do, assistants. You may take your places again.

Toad (who has been watching the experiments closely.) How interesting this is, Professor.

Bobby. I think it's mean, to keep a fellow fastened up like this and then torment him.

Bull-frog. Does it hurt as much as being skinned or having your legs cut off?

Mrs. Bufo. Or would you prefer to be stepped on or burned in a rubbish-pile?

Another Toad. How would you like to be stoned or kicked, for a change?

Small Toad. Perhaps you'd like a fish-hook in the corner of your mouth.

Bull-frog. Or one run the entire length of your body.

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

(*Frogs and toads all talk together and point at Bobby*)

Professor Rana (to Bobby). Wait a minute, we will give you a chance to defend yourself. It is not customary to inquire into the moral character of specimens, but we do not wish to be unjust. Perhaps you can explain why you made a bonfire the very next week after the toads came out of their winter quarters. Dozens of lives were destroyed before that fire was put out.

Bobby. I forgot about the toads.

Professor Rana. Carelessness!

Bull-frog. Tell us why you like to throw stones at us.

Bobby. To see you jump.

Professor Rana. Thoughtlessness! That's worse.

Mrs. Bufo. Why do you kick us, instead of lifting us gently when we are in your way?

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

Bobby. Because you will give me *warts* if I touch you.

Professor Rana. *Ignorance!* The toad is absolutely harmless. It has about it a liquid which might cause pain to a cut finger or a sensitive tissue like that of the mouth or eye, but the old story that a toad is poisonous is a silly fable.

Small Toad. Will you please tell me if you are the boy who last year carried home some of my babies in a tin-pail and let them die?

Bobby. I'm afraid I am.

Mrs. Bufo. Do explain why you dislike us.

Bobby (confused). I suppose it's your looks.

Professor Rana. Well, upon my word! I thought better of a boy than that. So you prefer boys with pretty faces and soft curling hair, and nice clothes, to those who can climb and jump, and who are not afraid of a tramp through the woods?

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

Bobby. Of course I don't. I hate boys who are always thinking about their clothes.

Professor Rana. Oh, you do! Now answer me a few more questions. Have you ever stolen birds' eggs?

Bobby. Y-e-es. (*Looks ashamed.*)

Professor Rana. Have you ever collected butterflies?

Bobby. Y-e-es.

Professor Rana. Have you taken nuts from the squirrels' cupboards?

Bobby. Y-e-e-s.

Professor Rana. Do you think we ought to have a very friendly feeling towards you?

Bobby. N-o-o. I don't.

Professor Rana. We have shown that you are not only useless but careless and thoughtless and ignorant. Is there any very good reason why we should let you go?

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

Bobby (looks very puzzled). I've a right to live, haven't I?

Professor Rana. Because you are so pretty?

All Frogs and Toads. Any better right than we have?

(Long pause. Frogs and toads glare at Bobby.)

Professor Rana. My friends, we must admit one good thing about this Boy. He is not afraid to be honest. He answered our questions truthfully and frankly. For my part, I like him.

Bobby. If you will let me go, I'll see that the boys don't hurt you any more.

Professor. I feel pretty sure we've converted you, and I'm going to let you go back and preach to the heathen, as the grown people say. You can see for yourself how much harm a boy can do if he doesn't stop to think. You are free.

(The frogs and toads all hop quickly away.)

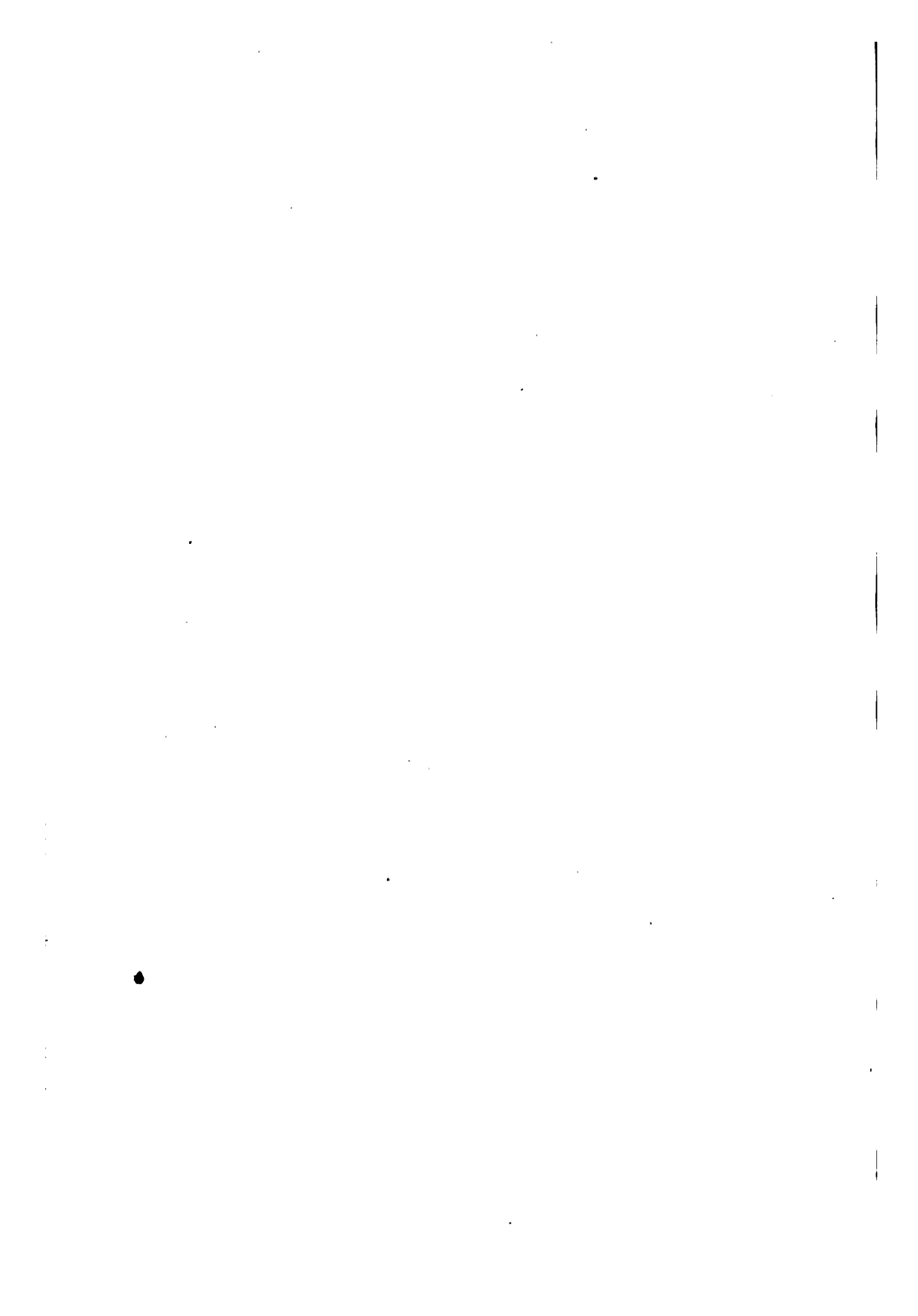
PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

Bobby scrambles to his feet, stretches his arms and legs and looks after them.)

Bobby. Well, I declare!

Professor Rana (from pond). Kerjunkt!

Bobby. Yes, sir, I'll remember.



COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

TIME: *Early morning*

PLACE: SCENE I. *Barnyard*
SCENE II. *Woodland*
SCENE III. *Barnyard*

CHARACTERS:

Cock-Alu, a rooster

Hen-Alie, his wife

Shabby-Hen, a neighbor

Woodland Friends:

Mr. Snail *Mrs. Dove*

Mr. Wildcat *Mr. Shepherd-dog*

Mrs. Squirrel *Mrs. Woodpecker*

PLOT OF THE PLAY

While eating her breakfast Hen-Alie chokes on a bean which sticks in her throat. Shabby-Hen, a neighbor, runs to her assistance and tells Cock-Alu nothing will help but a drop of water from the silver spring. The water must be fetched while the dew is falling. Cock-Alu starts to the silver spring. He meets various friends on the way and stops to talk to them. When he reaches the silver spring he finds a dry channel. In the meantime, Shabby-Hen tries to comfort Hen-Alie. At evening she offers to run to meet Cock-Alu and help him home with the drop of water. She meets him, hears him call out he has not found the spring, runs on through the darkness, finds the spring, and saves Hen-Alie.

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

SCENE I

PLACE: *The barnyard*

Cock-Alu (*crowes lustily*). Cock-a-doo-dle-doooo.

Hen-Alie (*looks admiringly at him*). Wonderful!

Cock-Alu. Hen-Alie, my dear little wife, I love you better than all the world; you know I do. I always told you so! I will do anything for you; I'd go round the world for you; I'd travel as far as the sun for you; you know I would. Tell me, what shall I do for you?

Hen-Alie. Crow! My dear Cock-Alu, crow!

Cock-Alu. Oh! That is such a little thing to ask! Cock-a-doo-dle-do. There, I've done it rarely this morning. I told you I'd do anything to please you. I'm sure I wakened the farmer's wife! And see, I aroused the dog

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

and cat. (*Cock-Alu struts up—and down flapping his wings.*)

Hen-Alie. Crow again, my dear! Your voice is wonderful.

Cock-Alu. Cock-a-doo-dle-doooo! (*Struts up and down.*)

Hen-Alie. There! At last you have awakened the pigeons, the horse, and the cow.

Cock-Alu. And all the farm-hands, my dear. No doubt I've awakened all the people in the village. Come, let us eat our breakfast. See, there are plenty of beans in the bean-straw. Why, here comes Shabby-Hen. What a fright she is with her long black legs, which look as if she had borrowed them from a hen twice her size. And she has no tail feathers at all! Pshaw!

Hen-Alie. She is the homeliest hen I've ever seen.

Shabby-Hen. Good morning, Hen-Alie! Good morning, Cock-Alu! Your wonderful crowing awakened all the village.

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Cock-Alu. There is no doubt about it, madam.

Hen-Alie. Cock-Alu's voice is wonderful! If you've finished your breakfast, dear, do crow again.

Cock-Alu. Cock-a-doo-dle-do—Cock-a-doo—

Hen-Alie (chokes on a bean which sticks in her throat). O Cock-Alu, Cock-Alu, I'm choking! Do help me.

Cock-Alu. What can I do for you? Shall I crow for help? Cock-a-doo-dle-doo.

Shabby-Hen (comes running up). O! Cock-Alu! Fetch Hen-Alie a drop of water from the silver spring in the beech-wood. Fetch it quickly while the dew is in it. That is the only way to help poor Hen-Alie. I'll stay with her until you come back.

Cock-Alu. Too bad! Poor Hen-Alie! There! There! I'll fetch you the drop of water from the silver spring in the beech-wood.

Hen-Alie. Please fetch it quickly, dear Cock-

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Alu. The bean sticks in my throat.
(*Coughs.*) Nothing but water with the dew
in it can cure me. Oh, Cock-Alu, run
quickly!

(*Shabby-Hen tries to comfort Hen-Alie.*)

Cock-Alu (starts off, crowing as he goes.)

Cock-a-doo-dle-do.
Cock-a-doo-dle-doo.
Cock-a-doo-dle-doooooooooooo.

Shabby-Hen. There, my dear Hen-Alie. See,
he's gone! I'm sure he'll come back as quickly
as possible. The drop of water with the dew
in it will cure you, I'm sure. There, my dear!
Try to bear up until Cock-Alu returns.

SCENE II

TIME: *A little later*

SCENE: *A woodland*

(*Cock-Alu is strolling along in the woods.*)

Cock-Alu. Oh, here comes my old friend,

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Mr. Snail. Good morning to you. Where are you going?

Mr. Snail. I'm going to the cabbage patch for my breakfast. And may I ask why you are in the woodland so early, Cock-Alu?

Cock-Alu. I'm on my way to the silver spring in the beech-wood to fetch a drop of water for my wife, Hen-Alie. She has a bean in her throat, and is choking.

Mr. Snail. Oh, run along quickly and get the water while the dew is in it; for nothing else will take the bean out of her throat. Don't stop by the way for the cows are coming down to the silver spring to drink. They'll stir up the water. Gather up my silver trail and give it to Hen-Alie with my love. I hope she'll soon be better, Cock-Alu.

Cock-Alu. Thank you, Mr. Snail. Your silver trail will make Hen-Alie a beautiful pair of stockings. Cock-a-doo-dle-doooo. (*He struts on and meets Mrs. Dove.*) Good morning, Mrs. Dove. Which way are you going?

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Mrs. Dove. I'm going to the garden to get peas for my young ones. May I ask why you are in the wood so early, Cock-Alu?

Cock-Alu. I'm on my way to the silver spring in the beech-wood to fetch a drop of water for my wife, Hen-Alie. She has a bean stuck in her throat, and is choking.

Mrs. Dove. She is choking! Dear me! I'm very sorry to hear that. But don't let me keep you, for water with the dew in it is the best thing there is to take a bean out of the throat. And let me give you a bit of advice. Make haste, for the greyhound is on his way to lap the spring, and he'll stir up the water. So run along; and here, take with you my blue velvet neck-ribbon. Give it to Hen-Alie with my love. I hope she will soon be better. Good day!

Cock-Alu. Thank you, Mrs. Dove. Your blue velvet neck-ribbon will look very pretty with the silver gauze stockings. Cock-a-doodle-dooooooooo! (*On he struts and soon meets Mr. Wildcat.*) Why, good-morning,

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Mr. Wildcat. Now may I ask where you are going?

Mr. Wildcat. I'm on my way to the forest to find something for breakfast. And what is your business in the woodland so early, Cock-Alu?

Cock-Alu. I'm going to the silver spring in the beech-wood, to get a drop of water for my wife, Hen-Alie. She has a bean stuck in her throat, and is choking.

Mr. Wildcat. Oh, indeed! Well, a drop of water with the dew in it will cure her, so don't let me keep you. And you had better make haste, Cock-Alu, for a woodman is on his way to fell a tree by the spring, and if a branch falls into it, the water will be stirred up; so off with you! But here, carry with you a flash of green fire from my right eye, and give it to Hen-Alie with my love. I hope she'll be better soon. Good day.

Cock-Alu. Thank you, Mr. Wildcat. Oh, what beautiful green light, like the green on

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

my best tail-feathers! I'll keep it for myself; it is much more becoming to me than it would be to Hen-Alie—poor Hen-Alie. Cock-a-doo-dle-dooooo! (*He struts on and meets Mr. Shepherd-dog.*) Good morning, Mr. Shepherd-dog. Where are you going?

Mr. Shepherd-dog. I'm going to hunt up a stray lamb for my master. What brings you abroad so early?

Cock-Alu. Oh, I'm on my way to the silver spring in the beech-wood to get a drop of water for my wife, Hen-Alie. She has a bean stuck in her throat, and is choking.

Mr. Shepherd-dog. Then why do you stop talking to me? Be off and bring her the drop of water with the dew in it. I heard the farmer say he was going to drain the spring dry to-day. You'll be too late if you don't mind. (*He hurries off.*)

Cock-Alu. What a rude fellow. And he never gave me one thing for poor Hen-Alie. The ill-natured churl. Cock-a-doo-dle-doo!

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Cock-a-doo-dle-dooooooooooooo! (*He struts on and meets Mrs. Squirrel.*)

Cock-Alu. Good morning, Mrs. Squirrel. What brings you abroad so early?

Mrs. Squirrel. Early do you call it? Why, I've been up these four hours. I just stopped to give my young ones their breakfast and then I set off to the silver spring for a drop of water while the dew was in it for my poor old husband who lies sick in bed. I'm now on my way back. There's nothing like water with the dew in it. I've got it here in a cherry leaf. And pray you, what business may take you abroad, Cock-Alu?

Cock-Alu. The same as yours. I'm going for water, too, for my wife, Hen-Alie. She has a bean stuck in her throat, and is choking.

Mrs. Squirrel. Ah! well-a-day! That's a bad thing. But run along with you, for the old sow is coming down with her nine little pigs and if they stir up the water it will be all too late for poor little Hen-Alie. Hurry off!

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

(*Mrs. Squirrel runs on. Cock-Alu looks after her a moment.*)

Cock-Alu. Humph! She might have given me some of the water out of her cherry leaf for my poor little Hen-Alie. But I'll hurry on and see what I can do. (*He struts on and meets Mrs. Woodpecker.*)

Cock-Alu. Good morning, Mrs. Woodpecker.

Mrs. Woodpecker. Good afternoon, Cock-Alu.

Cock-Alu. Afternoon, do you say? Dear me. How the time flies. Is your nest in the hollow tree finished?

Mrs. Woodpecker. Ah, my mate and I shall be obliged to find a new place for a nest. You see, we were very cozy in the sycamore by the silver spring in the beech-wood, but about an hour ago a woodman felled the tree. However, my mate and I are not sorry, because this morning the farmer began to dig a new water course which will quite drain the silver spring.

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Cock-Alu. Did the felling of the tree stir the clear water of the silver spring?

Mrs. Woodpecker. Yes, it did, indeed. And I'm sure by this time nearly all the water in the spring must be drained away.

Cock-Alu. Alas! What a pity that is, for I was on my way to the silver spring to get a drop of water with the dew in it. Alas!

Mrs. Woodpecker. Some one in your family is ill, Cock-Alu?

Cock-Alu. My little wife, Hen-Alie, has a bean stuck in her throat, and she is choking Oh, how sorry I am that the silver spring has been stirred up and drained.

Mrs. Woodpecker. How unfortunate that you didn't start earlier. There's nothing like a drop of the silver spring water with the dew in it to cure choking.

Cock-Alu. I met Mrs. Squirrel taking some of the water home to her sick husband. Do you think she would spare me a little?

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Mrs. Woodpecker. Ah, the old squirrel drank every drop and drained the cherry leaf jug. He was quite sick but he got well as soon as he drank the water and I saw him taking his wife and little ones out for an airing. There, I hear my mate calling me. Good day, Cock-Alu.

Cock-Alu. Good day, Mrs. Woodpecker. (*She hurries off.*) Well, there is nothing to do but go home and tell poor little Hen-Alie. I'm glad I have some presents for her. I do hope she is better.

SCENE III

TIME: *Early evening*

PLACE: *Barnyard*

Shabby-Hen. My dear Hen-Alie, I'm sure Cock-Alu will soon be here.

Hen-Alie. Do tell me, Shabby-Hen, how far away is the silver spring?

Shabby-Hen. Not very far away, my dear, but

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

I'm afraid Cock-Alu didn't know the short cut through the woods. I believe I'll run to meet him. No doubt he is very tired if he went the long way. If I can meet him, I'll carry the drop of water with the dew in it. Be brave, my dear friend. I shall soon be back.

(Shabby-Hen runs to meet Cock-Alu. A little later Cock-Alu appears.)

Cock-Alu. Cock-a-doo-dle-dooooooooooooooooo!

Hen-Alie. There he comes! My dear Cock-Alu!

Cock-Alu. Hen-Alie, my dear little wife, I've been very unlucky. I could not get you any water. The farmer drained the spring to-day. *(Hen-Alie groans.)* But look, my dear! See what beautiful presents I've brought you. My friend, the snail, sent you a pair of silver gauze stockings. And, see, Mrs. Dove sent you this beautiful blue velvet ribbon to wear with them.

Hen-Alie (faintly). Thank you, dear Cock-

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Alu. But I do wish you could have brought me some water with the dew in it. I fear these things will do me no good. Shabby-Hen stayed with me all day. She was a great comfort to me.

Cock-Alu. Oh, yes, I forgot to say I met her near the meadow. She was all out of breath, poor thing. What a fright she is!

Hen-Alie. She came to help you carry the water from the silver spring. Oh dear! Oh dear!

Cock-Alu. I'm sorry you're in pain, my dear. As I was saying, Shabby-Hen was so nearly out of breath that she didn't stop to answer me when I told her I couldn't get a drop of water.

(Hen-Alie groans.)

Cock-Alu. The minute I said I couldn't get the water because the spring was drained, she was off without saying another word. I'm sure I don't know where she went!

Hen-Alie (groans). Oh! for a drop of water from the silver spring.

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Cock-Alu. What a shame it is that the farmer drained the spring to-day! How thoughtless of him! Why, here comes Shabby-Hen as fast as her long legs can carry her. I wonder what's the matter. (*Shabby-Hen enters.*)

Shabby-Hen. My dear Hen-Alie, I've brought you some water from the silver spring. *And the evening dew is in it.* Open your mouth, my dear. The first drop will loosen the bean. There! The second drop will soften it. There! There! And the third will send it down your throat. There! It is gone!

Cock-Alu. My dear Hen-Alie! Has the bean really gone down your precious throat?

Hen-Alie. It has! It has, indeed!

Cock-Alu.

Cock-a-doo-dle-doooo!

Cock-a-doo-dle-dooooooooo!

How glad I am! Cock-a-doo-dle-dooooooooo!

(*Shabby-Hen starts away.*)

Hen-Alie. Stay a moment, dear Shabby-Hen.

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

We haven't thanked you for your kindness.
Do tell us how you got the water.

Cock-Alu. Yes, yes! Thank you! Thank you! You've been very kind.

Shabby-Hen. I happened to know the way to the new channel into which the farmer turned the spring.

Hen-Alie. But it was dark in the wood, dear Shabby-Hen. And I'm sure the bats were whirring about and the owls hooting.

Shabby-Hen. I don't know, dear—I thought only of the silver spring.

Hen-Alie. Cock-Alu, Shabby-Hen has saved my life.

Cock-Alu. Cock-a-doo-dle-dooooo! How can we reward her, my dear?

Hen-Alie. She shall have the presents you brought for me. Here, my friend, are beautiful gauze stockings of silver and a lovely blue velvet ribbon. Take them, my dear. They will make you look handsome.

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

Shabby-Hen. Thank you, Hen-Alie. Good-night.

Cock-Alu. Wait! Wait! There is something I should like to say. Here under my wing I have a flash of green fire from Mr. Wild-cat's right eye. I was going to use it to brighten up my tail feathers. But, Shabby-Hen—it is yours.

Hen-Alie. Yes, Shabby-Hen, it is yours. Tomorrow, dear, you will be the handsomest hen in the barnyard.

Shabby-Hen. Thank you, my good friends.

Cock-Alu.

Cock-a-doo-dle-doooooo!

Cock-a-doo-dle-doooooo!



**MOTHER AUTUMN AND
NORTH WIND**

TIME: *Autumn*

PLACE: *In the open*

CHARACTERS

Mother Autumn

North Wind

Six Autumn Days

King Winter

Frost Fairies

PLOT OF THE PLAY

Autumn Days are busy attending to the flowers, fruit, and trees. North Wind, a little piper, comes in to join them and make merry; but the Days do not welcome him; they go on with their work. Annoyed at this, he blows so hard that he scatters the leaves in all directions and causes general confusion and disturbance everywhere. Mother Autumn comes upon the scene and orders him to leave. The result is that as soon as she is gone, he comes back and pipes a tune which makes her Days leave their work and follow him. Mother Autumn returns to find her Days gone. King Winter appears ready to take her place. As soon as Mother Autumn explains to King Winter the trouble, he knows the little piper was North Wind, whom he allowed to leave the cave on a frolic. King Winter offers to return to his cave and make North Wind pipe the Autumn Days back. For punishment North Wind will never be permitted to leave King Winter's cave except during the winter months.

MOTHER AUTUMN AND NORTH WIND

SCENE: *An open place. Six Autumn Days are busy coloring flowers, fruit, and the leaves on the trees.*

First Day. Do give me some more color. This yellow won't stay on the pumpkins.

Second Day. Mix it deeper. See, mine is quite golden for the edges of these leaves. Use some of this, if you wish.

Third Day. Or some of mine. Here—I have plenty of red—bright and clear.

All (looking up). Ha! ha! Red for pumpkins! Much *you* know about color.

Fourth Day. Yes! Who ever heard of a red pumpkin! But I've just finished these golden-rods and have nearly a pail full of yellow

MOTHER AUTUMN

left. Touch up the pumpkins with some of this.

First Day (coming forward). Just the thing! But I do wish Mother Autumn would come and show me how it should be put on.

Fifth Day. She did. She showed us all, and warned us to lose no time about it. So you'd better make short work of those pumpkins.

First Day. But I can't make them look right. I don't know how much to put on—

Sixth Day (looking up from work). Oh, nonsense. Just daub and daub and don't think so much about it. I put on any color I choose and as much as I like. The more the merrier, say I.

Second Day. Oh, that's why your leaves are all speckled and blotched and—what not! But I like them. They're prettier than usual, this year.

(While they are speaking Frost Fairies slip

MOTHER AUTUMN

in unseen and run among them, touching them gently.)

Third Day (shivering). Oh, it's getting so cold. (*Drops her bucket of paint.*) There! I have spilled all my color and these leaves are not half done.

Sixth Day. Never mind. The paint will all mix up with the rest and my golden-rod under the trees will catch most of it. But it is getting cold; I'm shivering, too.

All (shivering). Oh! oh!

First Day. Something cold touched me. It felt like an icy finger.

Second Day. I *do* wish you would go to work. Ouch! Something pinched the end of my nose.

Fourth Day. And nipped my toes and the ends of my fingers. Look, look!

(All catch sight of the Frost Fairies.)

All. Ho! ho! Now we know! You are the jolly little Frost Fairies.

MOTHER AUTUMN

Fifth Day. But you must go away. We have work to do.

Second Day. Yes, yes, run away. Mother Autumn will be very angry if she finds you here.

A Frost Fairy (whispering). Sh! We slipped away for we want you to dance and play with us.

First Day. We cannot. Besides, if we did, you Frost Fairies would spoil the pumpkins.

Second Day. And all my leaves.

Third Day. And my flowers, too. Do go away and let us finish our work.

(The Frost Fairies continue to tease them. The sound of the piper is heard. The Frost Fairies dance out of sight as North Wind appears.)

Fifth Day. Ho! ho! Who comes here?

Sixth Day. A little piper! Good fortune, lad; your sweet music has quieted some trouble-

MOTHER AUTUMN

some little creatures who came a few minutes ago into our midst.

First Day. And made me shiver.

Second Day. And pinched my nose

Third Day. And nipped my toes.

Fourth Day. And touched the fruit with frosty fingers.

Sixth Day. We should like to know who you are. Tell us your name, merry sir.

North Wind.

I'm the shrill little piper
That bends all the trees;
I whirl and I twirl as
I scatter the leaves.

I'm the shrill little piper.
Oh! how I can blow.
I dance with the hail and
I play with the snow.

(He dances and skips about.)

All. A jolly fellow!

MOTHER AUTUMN

Fifth Day. The Frost Fairies were teasing us before you came, but they hid when they saw you. Perhaps, little piper, you can rid us of them. We wish to go on with our work.

Sixth Day. Do! Then will we gladly listen to your sweet music and you shall join in our merry-making to your heart's content. Do send away those rude little creatures so that they cannot trouble us any more.

(North Wind pipes a tune. The Frost Fairies come out of their hiding place. They follow him as he pipes them away. Days go on with their work.)

Fourth Day. It's well they are gone.

First Day. No more of their icy nips. Isn't he a fine little piper!

Second Day. I'd like to hear his music again. *(Sound of piper is heard.)* Hark! I believe he is coming back.

All. He is! He is!

North Wind (enters blusteringly). Ho! ho!

MOTHER AUTUMN

I've come back to join you in the merry-making. Come!

Third Day. Let's have a jolly time.

Fifth Day. Not until the work is done.

Sixth Day. No merry-making yet, even for pipers.

North Wind. You bade me return and join in your merry-making to my heart's content. Now you say you cannot stop, even for pipers. Ho! ho! then! The shrill little piper will make merry himself!

(He skips boisterously about, blowing leaves and scattering everything around. Some of the Days join in the fun, some look frightened. In the midst of the confusion Mother Autumn enters.)

Mother Autumn. What does this mean? My Autumn Days at play instead of at work and all in confusion. Who is this strange fellow?

All. He calls himself the shrill little piper, Mother Autumn. Hear his sweet music!

MOTHER AUTUMN

Mother Autumn. Little piper, indeed! Begone, sir, and leave my Days to finish their work.

First Day. But, Mother Autumn, he called away the troublesome Frost Fairies from us.

Second Day. And played us sweet music.

Third Day. And he can do wonderful things, Mother Autumn. He's a clever little fellow.

Mother Autumn. Too clever, by half! He shall not stay here and scatter my leaves and harm the fruit. Begone, sir!

North Wind. You bid me go? Then my pipe and I will take all with us!

(North Wind goes out. The Autumn Days begin to put things in order. Mother Autumn watches them awhile.)

Mother Autumn. 'Tis well that noisy creature is gone. He mustn't be found here again or harm will come to him.

(She goes away. Music is heard, and the

MOTHER AUTUMN

Days begin to dance. The piper appears, keeps on playing his tune. One by one the Days leave their work and follow the piper. Mother Autumn returns to find them all gone.)

Mother Autumn (wringing her hands). Gone! All gone! What does it mean! And the work not done. Old Winter will think it is time for him to come. What shall I do? What shall I do? (*While she is speaking, King Winter enters.*) What does this mean? Why have you come, King Winter?

King Winter. I thought you had gone, Mother Autumn. Your Days came to my cave.

Mother Autumn. Shame on them, then, for leaving their work before it is finished. Go back with your ice and snow. Give me my Days again, I beg you!

King Winter. But, good Mother Autumn, here I am. The children will think I have come, and the people will get all things in readiness for my stay. They are even now closing their doors and lighting their fires.

MOTHER AUTUMN

Mother Autumn. You *must* go back, King Winter, not for my sake, but for the children's sake. Nothing is ready for them—no fruit, no nuts, not one of all the good things they look for me to give them. My Days have finished none of the work, so willful have they been. I warned them again and again that mischief-makers were abroad and I told them to take care, particularly while I was away on errands. All would have been well had it not been for that piper, the little rogue.

King Winter. Piper, did you say?

Mother Autumn. Yes, the rude fellow. He called himself the shrill little piper and then boasted what he would do. He brought nothing but confusion into our midst and now I feel sure he has piped off my Days! Think of the children, good King Winter, and send my Days back to me.

King Winter (thoughtfully). The shrill little piper; that must have been North Wind. I let him out of my cave to-day for a frolic and he has been up to one of his tricks again. He

MOTHER AUTUMN

is too rough, by far. I see he must never leave the cave except in my own time. Good Mother Autumn, since he piped your Days away, *he must pipe them back again!*

Mother Autumn. Thank you, King Winter, thank you.

King Winter. I'll send the rogue back with them. Ha! ha! The people will laugh and say, "We had one day this autumn that was just like winter." And so they had! And so they had!

(King Winter goes off, laughing.)

Mother Autumn (looking after him). I'll no longer think the old fellow is cold-hearted. He keeps as warm a fire in his heart as he makes people keep on their hearths. (*Music is heard.*) I'm sure I hear that piper again.

(Autumn Days are heard laughing. They run in.)

All. Good Mother Autumn, here we are.

(They crowd round her.)

MOTHER AUTUMN

Mother Autumn. 'Tis well you are back, my Days. I well know who the mischief-maker was this time. But old King Winter has promised that that rogue of a piper shall not leave his cave in my season again.

(All stop and listen to the music of the piper as he leaves.)

All. But just one round of merry-making while we can hear his sweet music. Come, good Mother Autumn.

Mother Autumn. Just one! Then to work! .

(All circle round Mother Autumn and dance as the music fades away.)

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

TIME: *Morning*

PLACE: SCENE I: *On the porch of a cottage*

SCENE II: *Interior of cottage*

CHARACTERS:

Sally

The Fairy Shoemaker

PLOT OF THE PLAY

Sally is discontented. She envies Polly, who lives in a neat cottage across the fields. A strange little man appears and offers to get Sally a servant who will work well and bring thrift into the family. The little man's reward must be a bowl of curds set in a very tidy kitchen.

In a few days the stranger comes to Sally's cottage and brings her the thrifty one-eyed servant.

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

SCENE I

Sally is sitting on the little porch of her cottage, which looks untidy and poorly kept. The curtains are limp and soiled. Sally's clothes are old and ragged. She is looking across the fields, where she can see a bright, tidy-looking cottage.

Sally. How bright and cheery Polly's cottage looks. She has new curtains again this spring—at least they look new. (*She looks at the windows of her cottage.*) How old and dirty mine look. Oh dear! Good luck never seems to come to my cottage. Why, what is that noise? Tap! tap! tap! It comes from behind the rosebush. I'll step down and see what it is.

(She steps down off the porch and sees a queer little man. He wears a blue coat, yel-



The Fairy Shoemaker jumps to his feet, holding his hammer and little shoe in his hands.

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

low vest, and red boots. A long leathern apron covers his clothes. He has been pegging away busily making a tiny bit of a shoe. When Sally appears he jumps to his feet, holding his hammer and little shoe in his hands.)

Fairy Shoemaker. Good morning, mistress. Isn't this a bright beautiful day?

Sally. I hadn't noticed.

Fairy Shoemaker. May I ask, mistress, why you were looking so earnestly across the field?

Sally (sighs). I was looking at my neighbor's cottage.

Fairy Shoemaker (looks across the field). Why, that is where Tom, the gardener's wife, lives—little Polly she used to be called. It is a very pretty cottage. It looks thriving, doesn't it, now?

Sally. She was always lucky. Look how well she seems to get on. Ah, I remember very well that we were married on the same day.

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

Now I have *nothing*, and she has two pigs and a cow and some chickens and—

Fairy Shoemaker. And a lot of flax that she spins in the winter; and a Sunday frock made out of as good green stuff as was ever seen; and a handsome silk handkerchief for an apron. Her husband has a red waistcoat with three rows of blue glass buttons. And they have a flitch of bacon in the chimney corner and a rope of onions and plenty of potatoes and—

Sally. Yes, yes, I know. She is, indeed, a very lucky woman.

Fairy Shoemaker. And a tea-tray with the picture of Daniel in the lion's den on it, and plenty of snowy linen. Tell me, mistress, has your husband work?

Sally (shakes her head sadly). No—he hasn't.

Fairy Shoemaker. Why, how is that? Can't he get work?

Sally. No—his last master wouldn't keep him

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

because he was so shabby. Oh! dear! We are very unlucky.

Fairy Shoemaker. Humph! Well, as I was saying, your neighbor across the field gets on very well indeed. And no wonder! Now I've nothing to do with other people's secrets—but—but—I could tell you something. But, no, no! I'm too busy and I must be off.

(He starts away carrying his stool, tools, etc.)

Sally. Could tell me what, good shoemaker? Pray tell me why it is no wonder that my neighbor across the fields thrives so well?

Fairy Shoemaker. Well, it's no business of mine but, as I said before, it's no wonder *some* people thrive.

Sally. Do tell me what you know!

Fairy Shoemaker (comes close and whispers).
Your neighbor has a *servant!*

Sally. A *servant!* That cannot be. Why, I've never seen one there.

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

Fairy Shoemaker. Your neighbor has a *servant*—a hard-working servant who is always helping her.

Sally. Ah! No wonder the cottage always looks so tidy. But I think you are mistaken, for how could she afford to pay a servant?

Fairy Shoemaker. She has a *servant!* A one-eyed servant. And to my certain knowledge she pays this servant no wages! Well, good morning, mistress, I must go.

Sally. Oh, good cobbler, *do* stop a moment. Where did Polly get this servant who works for nothing?

Fairy Shoemaker. I'm sure I can't say! But this I know—servants are plentiful enough and Polly uses hers well, I can tell you.

Sally. And what does this servant do for Polly?

Fairy Shoemaker. Do for her? Oh, all sorts of things. I think she's the cause of all the prosperity. To my certain knowledge she never refuses to do anything. She keeps

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

Tom's and Polly's clothes in beautiful order
—and the *baby's*.

Sally. Dear me! I see it all now. Polly is indeed a very lucky woman. She takes good care that I never get a glimpse of this servant. And you say she has only one eye? How very unfortunate for her. Tell me how she came to have only one eye?

Fairy Shoemaker. Oh! It runs in the family. They are all so—they have only one eye apiece. But they make very good use of it. Why Polly's servant has a cousin who is blind—stone blind. And sometimes this blind cousin comes to the cottage and helps with the work. That's how Polly gets a good deal of her money. These two work for her and she takes what they make to market and that is how she has money enough to buy all those handsome things.

Sally. Dear me! And to think that I haven't a soul to do one thing for me. How hard it is.
(*She begins to cry.*)

Fairy Shoemaker (*looks at her with pity*).

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

Well, you are to be pitied, certainly, and if I were not in such a hurry—

Sally. Oh, do wait a moment. Were you going to say you could help me? Now I've heard you fairy people are very fond of curds and cream. If you would help me, I promise to set a bowl of curds and cream on the hearth every evening and nobody shall see you when you come and go.

Fairy Shoemaker. Well—why—you see—my people are very particular about—in short, about cleanliness and your house is not what one would call very clean. No offense, I hope?

Sally. But—it shall be always clean. Every day of my life I'll tidy the house—sweep it and dust it and scrub my kitchen floor—I'll clean the hearth and windows and—

Fairy Shoemaker. Oh, very well! Very well! Then I should not wonder if I could meet with a one-eyed servant—like your neighbor's—yes—I think I can find one for you. It may take

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

me several days, but remember in the meantime I shall come each day for my dish of curds.

Sally. Yes, indeed, and I'll put some whipped cream over it. I will, indeed.

Fairy Shoemaker (smacking his lips, picks up his tools, his stool and the shoe, wraps them up in his leathern apron and starts off.)
Good day, mistress—good day.

Sally. Good day to you. And don't forget the curds and cream—nor—nor—the servant—even if she has only one eye. (*She waves to the Fairy Shoemaker who hurries away.*)

SCENE II

Sally is working in the kitchen of the cottage. The curtains are white and the windows are polished. The floor is scrubbed and the hearth is clean; the andirons are polished bright, and a jug filled with hawthorne blossoms stands on the table.

Sally. My husband is so pleased with this nice

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

clean kitchen that I think I shall always keep it so. It must satisfy the Fairy Shoemaker, too, for he has been here three nights now for his curds and cream. I wonder how long it will take the queer little fellow to find me a servant. (*A tap at the door.*) Oh! I do believe that is his queer little tap—it sounds like the clicking of his little hammer.

(She opens the door and the Fairy Shoemaker trips quickly into the room.)

Sally. Good day, sir, good day. Walk in, do. Won't you have a chair?

Fairy Shoemaker. Good day, mistress. Well, I declare! Am I in the right place? How beautifully the sun shines through the clean windows, and what a sweet smell of hawthorne there is. Are you sure this is the right cottage?

Sally. Indeed it is. And now please tell me whether you have been able to find a servant for me.

Fairy Shoemaker (nods).

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

Sally. Oh, you have—and does she belong to the same family as Polly's?

Fairy Shoemaker. The same family. She's a one-eyed servant.

Sally. And, oh! I hope, sir, you remembered that I can pay no wages. You told her that, did you?

Fairy Shoemaker. She will expect no wages.

Sally. And do tell me when she can come. I'm most anxious to see her.

Fairy Shoemaker. I've brought her with me.

Sally. You've brought her with you? Ah, sir! Now I see you're playing one of your tricks on me.

Fairy Shoemaker. I've brought her with me.

Sally (looks about). I'm sure I see nobody.

Fairy Shoemaker (pulls a needle out of his pocket and hands it to Sally). Here she is, madam.

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

Sally. A needle! What does this mean?

Fairy Shoemaker. She'll do all sorts of work for you, mistress. She'll work from morning till night for you if you wish. She'll mend your clothes and your husband's, too. And she'll ask no wages. Do try her. In a few days I'll call to know how you like the one-eyed servant. Good day!

Sally (looking at the needle). So this is the one-eyed servant that the little elf meant. He shall not trick me. I'll set my servant to work and have a good report for him when he calls.

LITTLE REBELS

TIME: *Revolutionary period*

PLACE: SCENE I. *Near Boston Common*
SCENE II. *In General Gage's office*

CHARACTERS

<i>David</i>	<i>General Gage</i>
<i>Samuel</i>	<i>English Officer</i>
<i>John</i>	<i>English Soldier</i>

PLOT OF THE PLAY

Some little Boston lads find their Common spoiled by British soldiers encamped there. They take the matter to General Gage, who orders that in the future no British soldier shall spoil the Boston boys' fun.

LITTLE REBELS

SCENE I

An open space. Samuel and John enter carrying their skates. They stop and look about.

Samuel. This is where David was to meet us. I wonder if he went on to the pond. It's too cold to wait long. (*Blows on his fingers.*)

John. The skating will be jolly fun to-day.
(*A whistle is heard and David comes hurrying along.*)
Here he comes now. Hello, David. We're waiting for you.

David (excitedly). No skating to-day!

Samuel and John. No skating! Why?

David. I've been to the pond. Those British soldiers have spoiled the ice again! It's broken in places and is as rough as can be.

LITTLE REBELS

Samuel. What! The British soldiers have broken the ice?

John. They're the meanest lot of men I ever heard of. Why should they spoil our fun? I wish they were back in England or would clear out of Boston, anyway.

Samuel. They'd be glad enough to get out of Boston if General Washington would let them go. No doubt about that. I heard father say so this morning.

David. Last week they spoiled our sledding and now they've broken the ice on our skating pond. I tell you, boys, I think we've put up with these British soldiers' tricks long enough!

(A British soldier passing overhears what David says.)

British Soldier. What are you saying about the British soldier, Yankee Doodle?

David. We say you're a mean lot of men.

Samuel. You have spoiled all our winter fun.

LITTLE REBELS

We've had no sledding or skating since you British soldiers have been in our city.

John. I tell you the Boston lads all wish you were back in England.

British Soldier. Well, we shall not go back to Old England for you or for anybody else very soon. And so long as we stay in Boston, we don't intend to be bothered with you Yankee Doodle youngsters. So be off with you and don't come here again.

Samuel. You have no right to say that.

David. The Common belongs to us and we shall go and tell General Gage what you have done to spoil our fun.

British Soldier. Hear the lad talk! You'll go to General Gage? Why, there isn't a Yankee Doodle lad in this town brave enough to even face General Gage!

David. We'll go to him to-day! We'll go now. Come, boys!

LITTLE REBELS

British Soldier. Ha! ha! ha! You young rebels, General Gage will do nothing for you. But I dare say he will teach you a lesson.

SCENE II

A room in General Gage's headquarters. An officer opens the door as a knock is heard. The three boys enter.

Officer. Well, sirs, what can I do for you this morning?

David. We wish to speak to General Gage.

Officer. Wait here, then. I'll tell the General you wish to see him.

(The officer leaves the room. The three boys look anxiously at each other.)

John. You're not afraid, are you, David?

David. No-o-o.

Samuel. What are you going to say?

David. I'll tell him how unfairly his soldiers have treated us.

LITTLE REBELS

(General Gage and officer enter.)

Boys. Good day, sir.

General Gage. Good day, lads. You have something important to say to me?

David. If you please, sir, we've come to say that your soldiers have treated us very unfairly.

General Gage. What do you mean? Come, be brief. I've little time to spare.

David. Sir, the British soldiers have spoiled our fun on Boston Common. Last week they ruined our snow-hill and now they have broken the ice on our skating pond. They've no right to do this.

General Gage. Who sent you to me to complain? Speak up, you young rebels. Who told you to do this?

John. No one, sir.

David (proudly). We came of our own accord.

LITTLE REBELS

Samuel. On our way to the pond we met one of your soldiers. He laughed at us and said we'd have no sport on the Common to-day.

John. And he said the British soldiers didn't mean to be bothered any longer by the Yankee Doodle lads.

General Gage. And you argued with him, did you?

David. No, sir. We simply told him that this is *our* city and that the soldiers encamped here have no right to spoil our fun, for the Boston Common belongs to us.

Samuel. Sir, we told him we would complain to you.

General Gage. And what did he say?

Samuel. He laughed and said you would do nothing for us.

General Gage. And you didn't believe him or you wouldn't be here. My lads, you are right brave little men—not afraid to speak for your

LITTLE REBELS

rights and your freedom; your sport on Boston Common shall not be spoiled. (*Turning to officer.*) See to it that the British soldiers do nothing to interfere with the lads' winter sport on Boston Common again. Any soldier who disobeys my command shall be severely punished.

Boys. We thank you, sir, we thank you.

General Gage. Good day, my lads.

Boys. Good day, sir.



EVERYDAY GOLD

TIME: *Summer*

PLACE: SCENE I. *Kitchen*
SCENE II. *The brownies' cave*
SCENE III. *Kitchen*

CHARACTERS

<i>Grandmother</i>		<i>Tom</i>	
<i>Mary, her grandchild</i>		<i>Nip</i>	} <i>Brownies</i>
<i>Jane</i>	} <i>Mary's friends</i>	<i>Tuk</i>	
<i>Betty</i>		<i>Tid</i>	
<i>Jack</i>		<i>Village children</i>	

PLOT OF THE PLAY

Three brownies, Nip, Tuk, Tid, go from village to village picking up the gold that children waste; for example, minutes, broken promises, opportunities, temper, etc. Out of this wasted gold they fashion a crown for the most worthy child in the village.

EVERYDAY GOLD

SCENE I

A room in a humble home. In the center is a table and grouped around are a rocking chair and one or two plain chairs. At one side is a cupboard. Glimpses of a village street are seen through an open door and window at the back. Grandmother is ready to begin knitting and Mary has a broom in her hand ready for work.

Grandmother. Dear child! Won't it be too much work for you to do without grandmother's help?

Mary. No, Grannie. I'll be housekeeper today; and Jane is coming over to help me. Then you can get your knitting done. There!

(Mary draws up a chair and makes Grandmother sit down.)

Grandmother. But, Mary, there's sweeping to

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do and scrubbing and some ironing before the children come this afternoon. And there are two beds to make—and a cake!

Mary. Never mind, Grannie. We'll do it all, scrubbing and sweeping and everything. See if we don't—that is, all but the cake, Grannie. (*Anxiously.*) You'd better make that.

Grandmother. What a little woman you are, Mary. I suppose you children wouldn't want even a little brownie to drop in and help you?

Mary. No, not even a brownie. See, Grannie (*taking a broom*), and Jane will be here soon to help me.

Grandmother. I'll make the cake then, Mary. (*Sound of children's voices is heard outside.*) Dear me! What a noise those children do make. One would think they'd nothing to do but run and play in the street.

(*Grandmother goes on with her knitting. Mary looks up from her work just in time to see two brownies run into the room*)

EVERYDAY GOLD

through the door. A third brownie climbs in at the window. They see Mary at the same time that Mary sees them.)

Mary. Oh! (She throws a large kitchen apron over her head. One brownie scampers behind the door, another gets behind the cupboard. The third brownie runs around the room, then out the door. Mary slowly takes down her apron and looks around.) Oh! dear me!

Grandmother. What is it, Mary?

Mary. Oh, Grannie! I believe I saw a room full of brownies or fairies or something. (Mary seems out of breath.)

Grandmother. Very likely. Why, there's Jane. Good morning, Jane.

(Jane rushes in breathless from running.)

Jane. Good morning. Oh, Mary, did you see them? I mean the brownies. There must be a dozen. Did they come here?

Mary. Something scampered in at the door and the window. Were they brownies or fairies or elves?

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Jane (excitedly). I don't know. Mary, I saw one of them as he ran around your house. I was coming over to help you with your work and just as I turned the corner— (*As Jane is speaking, Jack jumps in at the window and looks around.*) Oh, there's Jack. Did you see them, too?

Mary. What are they, Jack?

Jack. Are there any more here? I chased a little fellow as far as I could. In a twinkling he was gone.

Mary. They were here a moment ago.

Jane. They're brownies or fairies, aren't they, Jack?

Jack (in disgust). Fairies? You don't believe in fairies, do you? They're more likely dwarfs.

Mary. But dwarfs live underground.

Jane. And brownies wear caps so that you can't see them.

Jack. They do if they get a chance to clap them

EVERYDAY GOLD

on their heads. I saw these little fellows well enough and I can tell you they're *not* fairies. Here comes Betty.

(Betty runs in with a bundle in her hand. Mary and Jane go forward to meet her.)

Mary. Oh, Betty, come and tell us what you saw. *(Betty puts bundle on the table.)*

Betty (pouting). I didn't see them at all. The children said there are three of these little fellows dressed in brown suits. They carried bags on their backs. Tom said the bags were nearly full when he saw them. They must be brownies or elves.

Mary. Elves live in the woods and among the flowers.

Betty. Well, they went toward the woods. Tom said they came to the village last night and he followed them right to the edge of the wood. He didn't see where they went after that.

Jack. The one I saw didn't have a bag. He

EVERYDAY GOLD

couldn't have gotten away so quickly if he had had one.

Jane. Which way did he go, Jack?

Jack. Toward the wood.

Betty (clapping her hands). Then it's the same one as Tom saw. Oh, can't we go to the woods and find where they stay? I *do* want to see them and it can't be far.

Jack. That's jolly! Come. We'll find Tom and we'll all go together.

Jane. Come, Mary. Won't it be fun?

Mary. I can't go, Jane. I've promised to do Grannie's work to-day.

Jane. Oh, I'll come back and help you, Mary. Come.

Betty. Do come, Mary—just to the edge of the wood.

Jack. It will be great sport to slip in and surprise them if we can find them.

EVERYDAY GOLD

Mary (shaking her head). No. Go without me this time. Grannie could not get her knitting and the rest of the work done if I should go. Come back this afternoon and tell me all about it. Grannie's going to make a cake.

Jane. Very well, Mary. I'll come back and tell you what we see if you really can't go.

(They start out. Betty sees the bundle she laid on table.)

Betty. Oh, Mary, there's that loaf of bread mother sent to Mrs. Jones. I didn't take it. Will you run over with it? I do so want to go to the woods.

Mary. Yes, I'll see that she gets it, Betty.

Jack. I wonder what I did with the flowers mother gave me for your grandmother. *(Jack stops to think.)* Oh, I remember, I left them at the turn in the road when I started to chase that little fellow.

Mary. Never mind. We have some beautiful blossoms out this morning and I'll get Grannie a splendid bouquet.

EVERYDAY GOLD

Jack. All right, Mary. I wish you were going, too. But we'll come back and you shall hear all about it.

Jane and Betty. Yes, we'll come back and tell you.

(They leave. Mary begins her work again. Grannie looks up from her knitting.)

Grandmother. Where did the children go, Mary?

Mary. They went to find where the brownies, or whatever those little creatures are, live. They're going to tell me all about it when they come back this afternoon.

Grandmother. And I'd better begin to make the cake now. I can take up my knitting again after it is done. *(Grandmother rises.)*

Mary. And I'll just run over to Mrs. Jones's with this loaf Betty left. I won't be gone long.

Grandmother. Be sure to tell her to let the children come in for cake this afternoon.

EVERYDAY GOLD.

Mary. All right, Grannie.

(Grandmother and Mary leave the room. The brownies peep out from their hiding places. They look around carefully, then come forward.)

Tuk (laying his fingers on his lips). Where's Nip?

Tid. He scampered off—back to the cave, I suppose. He'll soon learn our ways.

Tuk. Do you think she saw us? I didn't have time to clap my cap on.

Tid. Come. We must be quick here. I heard the children say they were going to find the place where we stay.

(They stoop down and seem to be looking carefully all over the floor.)

I can't see a bit of anything on this floor to pick up.

Tuk (seems to find something by the door).
Sh! See. Here are some tiny bits—of gold

EVERYDAY GOLD

—they're golden minutes dropped all about this doorway. Some careless children have been here. Look sharp and we'll get every one.

(They seem to pick up bits and put them into their bags. Tid goes to the table.)

Tid. Oh, here's a find. Look—a lump of gold right under the table.

Tuk (picking up another bit). And here's another and another—look like bits of a golden promise broken up and scattered all over everywhere. I told you we'd find some here.

Tid. I tell you there's not nearly so much gold here as we find in the other houses. We had no end of work to gather it up in most of the homes.

Tuk (coming closer to Tid). Sh! Perhaps we can manage to get more than ever here!

Tid. How?

Tuk. Try to make the little girl in this house leave her work.

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Tid. What will that do?

Tuk. Don't you see? Then *we'll* get all the golden minutes she will waste.

Tid. I see! I see! Then we could fill our bags and be off in no time.

Tuk. If she comes back we'll push her gently toward the window. Perhaps she'll then wish she had gone with the other children.

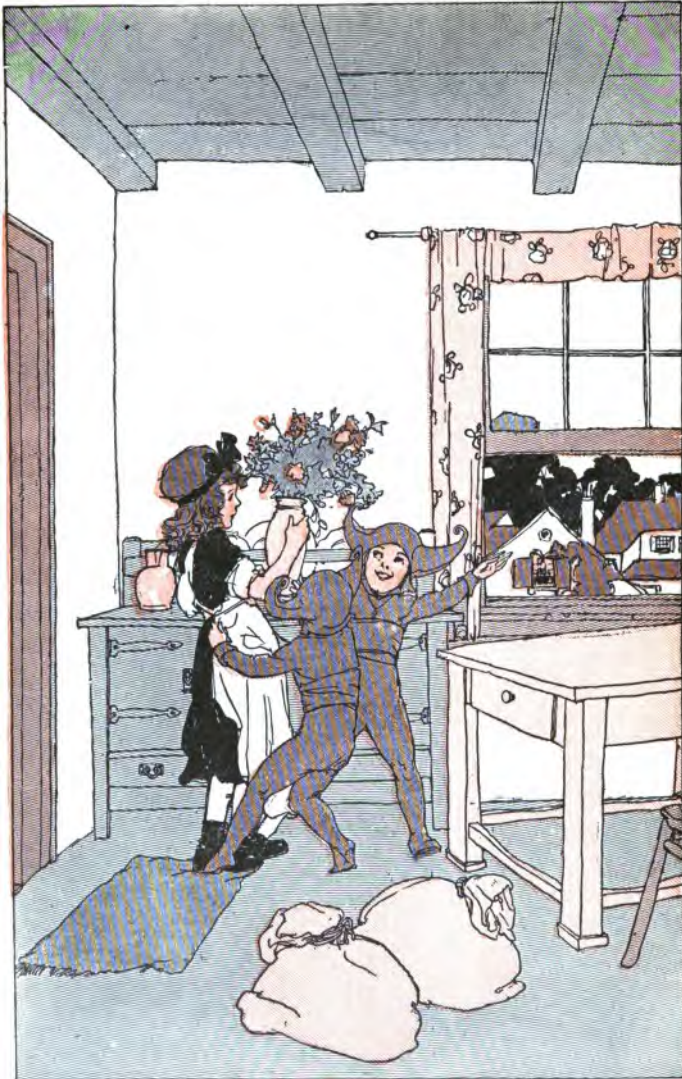
Tid. And then she may go!

Tuk. If she only will! Every minute she loses—so much more gold for us. If she loses an hour—why, that's sixty golden minutes!

Tid. Splendid. And the golden opportunity to do the work. That will be the biggest lump of all for us. Sh! Some one is coming.

Tuk (*peeps out the door*). It's the little girl coming back. Caps!

(Tuk and Tid put on their caps. Mary comes in arranging a bouquet of flowers. She goes to cupboard, gets a bowl and starts



Tuk and Tid take hold of Mary's dress and draw her gently toward the windows.

EVERYDAY GOLD

toward the table. Tuk and Tid sign to each other. They take hold of Mary's dress and draw her gently toward the window. Mary looks out longingly for a moment, then turns and goes toward the table and arranges the flowers for the center.)

Mary (out loud). But Grannie couldn't have done all the work if I had gone. (*Tuk and Tid try again. They push her gently toward the door. Mary goes as far as the door and turns back quickly.*) I'll have it all done. And I'm glad I *didn't* go to the woods with them!

(Mary continues arranging the flowers. Tuk and Tid are glad to find, after all, that she can't be made to lose her time. They dance around her and seem joyous; nod to each other, shoulder their bags, and slip out with a parting glance at Mary.)

Mary (arranging the flowers in the center of the table). There! How pretty they will look when the children come. I must call Grannie in to see them. (*Mary runs to door. Calls Grannie.*) Come, Grannie!

EVERYDAY GOLD

SCENE II

A Cave. In the center is seen an iron pot over a fire. One or two low stools stand around. Jane, Betty, Jack, Tom and some village children enter the cave stealthily from an entrance at the back. They go around looking at the various things. They take turns in trying the stools, etc. Tom discovers a bag.

Tom (holding up an empty bag). This is the place. See, here's a bag just like the ones I saw upon their backs.

Betty (pouting). But they aren't here!

Jack. They can't be far away. There is still some fire and the pot is hot. Sh! I hear some one coming now. Hide! Run into the darkest corners.

(Children scamper into the corners as Nip and Tuk and Tid enter.)

Tuk. So you got away without being caught.

EVERYDAY GOLD

Nip. Yes, but not without being seen. He followed me to the edge of the wood.

Tid. You'll soon learn our ways, Nip. Always take your cap and bag with you.

Tuk. Come, is there a fire? We'll need a good one to melt all this gold.

(Tuk and Tid lay down their bags and begin to open them.)

Nip. Two bags, nearly full!

Tuk. Yes, two bags—nearly full! Such carelessness and willful waste we have never found in any village before, have we, Tid?

Tid. Never. I wish the children of this village could see all the gold they've wasted. What work they have made for us!

(Children put their heads out as if to listen.)

Tuk. They'd never believe it.

(Nip stirs the fire and Tid gets the pot ready. While they are doing so, Jack and

EVERYDAY GOLD

Tom start forward and beckon to the others to follow.)

Nip, Tuk, and Tid (seeing them). Dear me!
Who are these? Village children?

Jack. Yes, sirs, we are village children who made bold to come to your cave.

Tom. We hid when we heard you coming, for we were afraid to have you know we were here until you said you wished we could see what you had found.

Tid. Ah! then you grew brave enough to show yourselves.

Tuk. And right you are, my little people. You should, indeed, see what your wastefulness and carelessness have done for our bags and our pot. Come, look, isn't that a fine lot of gold?

(Children all gather round.)

Tom. It is gold. Where did you get it?

Tuk. Picked it up—every bit of it—in your homes and your streets; it was thrown away,

EVERYDAY GOLD

wasted by the children of this village. Come, Tid, put the pot on the fire, and you, Nip, get ready to stir the gold. We must begin at once or we'll not get it melted to-day.

Jane (aside to other children). I never saw so much gold in my life. I'm sure I never threw any away.

Children. Nor I! Nor I! I'm sure I didn't.

(Tuk takes out his bag, drops gold into the pot. Nip stirs. Children watch eagerly.)

Betty. As for wasting it, I never had any to waste!

Tuk. Oh, yes you did. All children have plenty of gold to waste and they waste it every day. See, this is a handful of golden bits picked up near a doorway where some children had stopped their work to talk. A lot of minutes were wasted—golden minutes, every one of them.

(Children look at each other. Brownies keep taking out handfuls and dropping them gently into the pot.)

EVERYDAY GOLD

Tid. We found heaps of wasted gold in the schoolhouse—we always do—right under the children's desks. There was such a lot under one little boy's desk—a bright little fellow he was, too. Could have been at the head of his class. But he wouldn't study his spelling—plenty of wasted gold that time—played with his jack-knife during a reading lesson—more gold—came to school tardy—gold all along the road from his home to school. He can't go ahead if he keeps that up. We had the bags nearly full when we left there.

Tuk (takes out a big lump). This was a find! It was lying just at the turn in the road. A little boy's mother had asked him to take some flowers to a neighbor. He started and then forgot all about the errand—left the flowers right in the road—a golden opportunity lost that time.

(Tuk puts lump into the pot. It goes in with a splash. Jack looks conscious.)

Tid. Here's another one—just as big. A little girl lost that. She promised to help another

EVERYDAY GOLD

little girl with her work—then she went away and forgot her promise.

(Jane and Jack look at each other.)

Tuk (looking into the pot). This is a treasure. We found it in a home lying right under a table. Some one had asked a little girl to take a loaf of bread to some hungry children. She left the loaf on the table in a friend's house and asked the friend to do the errand for her while *she* ran away to have a good time. What a lump of gold that was! *(Children look at each other. Betty looks self-conscious. Tuk takes up another handful.)* These golden bits are temper. We find them scattered everywhere and it's no easy matter to gather them up.

Nip (looking into the pot). The pot's full.

Tuk. Come. Ready for the charm.

(The three brownies walk around the pot saying the rhyme.)

Tuk, Tid, and Nip:

“Boil and bubble, golden pot,
Stir the fire and make you hot.”

EVERYDAY GOLD

(They stir the fire under the pot. They look into pot as they say:

Children's wasted, wasted gold,
There's as much as you can hold—
Melt it, boil it, melt it down.

Boil it,

Melt it,

Make a crown!

(Children look surprised.)

Nip (looking into the pot and pointing). See golden minutes in the pot.

Tid (looking in and pointing). A golden promise one forgot.

Tuk (looking in and pointing).

Bits of temper melting there,
Chances, gold, lost everywhere!

Nip, Tid, Tuk.

Melt them, boil them, melt them down.

Boil them,

Melt them,

Make a crown!

Children. A crown?

Tid. We make a crown out of all the gold we find.

EVERYDAY GOLD

Jane. I thought only fairies wear crowns.

Tuk. The crown is not for us. It is for the child in *this* village whom it fits.

Children (put their hands up and feel their heads). Oh, who is it? Will it fit me? Can I wear it? Tell us what child it is!

Tuk. Ah, that we do not know. Each child will have a chance to try it on; for before we leave we must find the child whom this crown fits.

(Children talk among themselves. Brownies go on with their stirring.)

Jane (nervously). I think I must be going. I promised mother I'd be back as soon as I had helped— *(She stops suddenly.)*

Tid. You'll not stay and see the crown finished?

Jane. Oh, oh, no thank you. I—I promised—

Jack (starting up). And I've an errand to do—
—I'd better be going—

EVERYDAY GOLD

(Brownies nod and wink at each other but go on stirring.)

Tom. My lessons—oh, let's all go. We've been here long enough. Come.

Betty. We hope you'll stay and come to the village again.

Tuk. We can't stay here. As soon as our work is done, we must go to another village farther on.

Children. We do want to see the crown.

Tid. We promise that you'll see the crown—every one of you.

Jane. Then come, children, we're all going. Thank you, sirs, and good day.

Tid. Good day to you, children. Remember the crown will fit but *one!* (*Children run out calling, "Good day." Brownies give each other a knowing look. Tuk lifts pot off the fire. Tid puts a ladle into the pot and lifts out a band of gold.*) See! Here it is!

EVERYDAY GOLD

Nip and Tuk. The crown! The crown! Oh!

Tid (takes it in his hand and appears to write something around it). "For the child whom this crown fits." Now to find the child. Come! *(They run out wearing their caps. They take the crown but leave their bags.)*

SCENE III

Mary's home. Same as Scene I. Tid, Nip, and Tuk enter wearing their caps. One carries the crown. They look around in all corners before speaking.

Tid. Perhaps we'll find the one we seek in this home.

Tuk. We can't leave until the child is found. I heard some children say that they were coming here this afternoon.

(They see the flowers on the table and all point to them as though struck at once with the same idea. They go to the table and one slips the crown over the flowers so that it encircles them and rests on the table.)

EVERYDAY GOLD

Tuk. There, they can easily find it. We'd better go outside and watch. Come! (*They slip out as grandmother and Mary enter. Mary carries a large cake.*)

Mary (*placing cake on table and admiring it*). It's a beautiful one, Grannie. Won't the children's eyes open wide when they see it. I believe I hear some of them coming now. (*Grandmother nods, takes a chair and begins knitting. Mary runs to the window to look out.*) Here are Jane, Betty, and Tom. Come in, the cake's fine!

(*Jane, Betty, and Tom enter and greet grandmother and Mary.*)

Betty. Oh, Mary, we found the place where the little creatures stay.

Jane. They're in a cave at the edge of the wood.

Tom. Just where I saw them go last night.

Mary. Oh, tell me, what are they like?

Betty. No one was there when we reached the cave but they soon came and we hid.

EVERYDAY GOLD

Tom. Jack and I peeped out and watched them all the time.

Jane. But we didn't let them know we were there until they were emptying their bags into the pot. Soon we heard them say, "I wish the children of the village could see how much gold they have wasted." Then we came out.

Betty. They were emptying big bags of gold into the pot.

Mary. Bags of gold?

Betty, Jane, and Tom. Yes, gold! Gold,
Mary. Bags of gold!

Jane. They said it was all gold that we children wasted.

Mary. But I don't understand. How do we children waste gold?

Betty. Oh, we do, Mary, we children really do. Every time we miss a chance to do a kind act, we waste a lot of gold. (*Betty hesitates.*) Why, Mary—it was kind of you to take the bread for me. I forgot!

EVERYDAY GOLD

Tom. Every time you play at school instead of getting your lessons—away goes some gold!

Jane. Or lose your temper, or break a promise. We waste all that gold. Oh, Mary, I didn't come back to help you—it was too late when we left the cave—it didn't seem of any use to come then.

Betty. And the little creatures gather it up, Mary, and put it into their bags and then—what do you think they do with all the gold? Guess.

Mary. Keep it in the pot? I've often heard of the pot of gold.

Tom. No, nothing of that sort—guess again.

Mary. Hide it in the cave?

Jane and Betty. No, no, no.

Mary. Tell me, I can't guess.

Betty. They melt it altogether and make a crown of it.

EVERYDAY GOLD

Mary. A crown! How beautiful! Do they wear it themselves? Perhaps they have a king.

Jane. No, Mary, the crown is for some child in the village. We don't know who the child is.

Tom. Neither do they.

Mary. But how are they to find the child?

Betty. Every one of us is going to have a chance to try it on. It is for the child whom the crown fits—that's what they said. (*Sound of children's voices is heard.*) Oh, here come the other children.

(Four village children enter and exchange greetings. As they finish Jack comes in carrying a large bouquet. He greets them all.)

Jack. Here, Mary, this is for your grandmother.

Mary. How beautiful. I'll get a vase to put them in.

Jane. Let me get the vase, Mary.

EVERYDAY GOLD

Betty. Oh, let me help, too. I want to help.

(Jane rushes to get a vase and Betty fills it with water. Mary shows flowers to grandmother.)

Grandmother. Thank you, Jack, for remembering me. Put them on the table, Mary.

(Children go toward the table as Mary takes vase and puts flowers into it.)

Mary. I'll put them right in the middle of the table, Jack.

(As Mary moves her flowers from the center of the table, the children catch sight of the crown.)

Betty. Oh, Mary, look. Look, Jane, there's something shining around the flowers. It looks like a band of gold.

Children (looking closer). A band of gold?

Jane. Lift it up, Mary.

Mary (sets down flowers and lifts up crown).
It looks like a crown. There's something

EVERYDAY GOLD

written on it. (*Reading.*) "For the child whom this crown fits."

Tom and Jack. It's the crown.

Betty. It is! It is!

(All the children look at it. Mary takes it, shows it to her grandmother and reads what is written around it to her.)

Grandmother. Beautiful. You must all take turns and try it on.

Children. Yes, yes, let's try it on.

(Mary sets crown on the table. First child lifts it up and places it upon her head.)

First Child. Oh, it's too large.

(Each child replaces crown upon the table after trying it on. All laugh, and take it as fun.)

Second Child. I'm afraid it's too small for me.

Third Child. Can't be meant for me!

Fourth Child. I'm surely not the child.

EVERYDAY GOLD

Betty. I wonder if I am. No, no, no! Not I!

Jane (shaking her head). Doesn't set—very—well!

Tom. It isn't for this head.

Jack. Now, I'll try. Ho! ho! It's no fit for Jack.

Children. Mary hasn't tried yet. It's Mary's turn. Try it on, Mary. (*Mary tries it on. She shakes her head to make sure it fits.*) It fits Mary. Mary can wear the crown. They said it would fit but *one*. See, it was meant for her head. Ho! ho! We have found the child. (*Children clap their hands and dance with joy.*)

Jane. I wish the little creatures could see the crown on Mary's head.

(*Tid, Nip, and Tuk peep in at the window.*)

Grandmother. Very likely they can. I feel sure they know now whom the crown fits.

Mary. I'm sure I thank them. The crown is very beautiful.

EVERYDAY GOLD

Grandmother. Come, Mary, dear child, give the children some cake.

(Mary goes to the table and begins to cut the cake.)

Jack. And I say, "Hurrah for Mary!"

(Children join in a circle round Mary and sing. Tid, Nip, and Tuk nod approval as curtain falls.)



THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

TIME: *Morning and evening*

PLACE: SCENE I. *A shoemaker's cottage*
SCENE II. *Scene in an open space*
SCENE III. *Cottage*
SCENE IV. *Cottage*
Pantomime
SCENE V. *Cottage*

CHARACTERS

<i>Ralph, the village shoemaker</i>	<i>The Miller and his wife</i>
	<i>Handa, their daughter</i>
<i>Minna, his wife</i>	<i>Lisbeth and Frieda, vil-</i>
<i>Siegfried, their son</i>	<i>lage children</i>
<i>The Peddler Shoemaker</i>	<i>Anna, their mother</i>

PLOT OF THE PLAY

A wizard shoemaker comes to the village where Ralph has made shoes for years. The stranger succeeds in taking Ralph's trade. By means of magic he captures some of the village children in order to make them work for him. While the villagers search for the lost children, the Fairy Godmother tells Siegfried how he can destroy the wizard's magic and rescue the stolen children.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

SCENE I

A shoemaker's cottage. Ralph, the shoemaker, sits at work making shoes in the old-fashioned way. On a flat stone which he holds, the shoemaker is hammering a piece of wet leather. His tools lie on a bench at his side.

Minna. Where is Siegfried, father?

Ralph. He has gone to the mill to fetch Handa. I want her to try on these shoes. See, I've almost finished them.

Minna. You've had a busy day.

Ralph. A busy week. It happens that a number of the villagers need new shoes. I must not disappoint them.

Siegfried (enters with Handa, laughing and talking). Here she is, father.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

Handa. Good morning. Are my shoes finished?

Minna. Good morning. You were gone a long time, Siegfried.

Ralph. The shoes are almost finished, Handa. I want you to see if they fit.

Handa. See, these are almost worn out, but they have worn a long time. No one can make shoes as well as you do. I shall always have shoes made here.

Minna. Why, of course you will, dear child. Ralph is the only one in the village who makes shoes.

(Children look at each other and then at Ralph and Minna.)

Siegfried. Father, a peddler with shoes to sell has come to the village. He has a stall on the green not far away from the mill.

Minna. And he sells shoes?

Siegfried. His stall is filled with shoes of all

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

kinds and colors. He's a very queer looking old man with a wrinkled face and he wears a peaked cap.

Handa. I wonder why he came here. We have a shoemaker. (*Going up to Ralph.*) I'm sure no one will buy from him. You've been the village shoemaker ever since I can remember.

Ralph. How long has he been in the village?

Handa. He came a few days ago.

Minna. I wonder if his shoes are well made.

Handa. I don't know. I haven't been to his stall.

Siegfried. We met Lisbeth this morning. She says his shoes are very cheap, father, and—

Ralph. Go on, lad. Tell us what you've heard.

Siegfried. She says his shoes are very beautiful, and are made in many colors—red, yellow, violet, besides black ones. Some of them

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have shining buckles and others bows or rosettes.

Handa. I don't believe Lisbeth bought a pair of this peddler's shoes.

Siegfried. She didn't say. You remember, Handa, she told us the old man called out to the villagers to come and examine his shoes. But the first day they shook their heads and said, "Ralph, the shoemaker, has made good shoes for us for many a year."

Minna. Of course he has. I'm sure you will not lose a customer.

Ralph. I've tried to do good work. Come, lass, let us see how this pair fits.

Handa (tries on the shoes). Oh, how pretty they are—and they fit, too. Good shoemaker, may I take them home with me?

Ralph. They will be finished in half an hour. Run and play with Siegfried. I hope they will wear as long as the old ones did.

Handa. A whole year! The old peddler

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hasn't a pair in his pack as well made as mine.
He shall not sell shoes to me.

SCENE II

TIME: *A few days later*

PLACE: *On the green near the village mill. A wrinkled old man with a pointed cap is standing at his stall. Shoes and slippers of many colors are seen. He calls to the villagers.*

Peddler.

Come, buy! Come, buy!
Shoes for all!
Who'll try? Who'll try?
Red shoes and blue shoes,
Black shoes and white shoes,
Thick shoes and thin shoes,
Strong shoes and light shoes.
Come, buy! Come, buy!
Shoes for all!
Who'll try? Who'll try?

(A few villagers pass, and shake their heads. The miller, his wife, and Handa appear.)



A wrinkled old man with a pointed cap is standing at his stall.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

Handa (to peddler). Ralph, the village shoemaker, makes our shoes.

Peddler. The strongest shoes on my stall cost only five pence. Where can you buy well made shoes at that price. Ralph, the shoemaker, has been charging you too much.

Miller's Wife. What is it you say?

Handa. Come, mother—

Peddler. A pair of good shoes, mistress, for five pence.

Miller's Wife. Let us look at them, father.

Handa. Oh, father, I'm sure they're not well made.

Miller's Wife. Hush, child.

Miller. 'Twill do no harm to look at them.

(They go to the stall and look carefully at the shoes.)

Peddler (to Handa). I sold Lisbeth, the baker's lass, a pair like these red ones.

Handa. I shall always wear Ralph's shoes.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

Miller's Wife. Nonsense, child. (*Takes up a pair of red shoes.*) How pretty these are! See the bright buckles.

Miller. Here's a good stout pair. How much are these?

Peddler. Five silver pennies, sir.

Miller. And cheap enough, too. I'll take this pair. Come, wife, select a pair for yourself and Handa. They may not be quite so well made as Ralph's, but they're the cheapest shoes I've ever seen.

Miller's Wife. I'll take this pair for myself and the red slippers for Handa.

(*Lisbeth and Frieda come running to the stall.*)

Lisbeth. Frieda wants a pair of red shoes like mine.

Miller's Wife. And I've bought a pair for Handa.

Handa. I don't like red shoes.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

Lisbeth. The peddler's shoes are very cheap.
Mother is coming to look at them.

Miller's Wife. And a good bargain she'll find,
I'm sure.

(*Others come to the stall.*)

Peddler (cries out).

Come, buy! Come, buy!
Shoes for all!
Who'll try? Who'll try?
Come, buy! Come, buy!
Red shoes and blue shoes,
Black shoes and white shoes,
Thick shoes and thin shoes,
Strong shoes and light shoes.
Come, buy! Come, buy!
Shoes for all!
Who'll try? Who'll try?

SCENE III

TIME: *A few weeks later—afternoon*

PLACE: *The shoemaker's cottage*

Ralph. Minna, I fear we must leave the vil-
lage. My customers have left me, and are

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now buying shoes from the peddler. We cannot live here if I get no orders for shoes.

Minna. How is it he can sell shoes for so much less than you can make them? I'm sure he doesn't use good leather. The villagers will soon find out that he is cheating them.

Ralph. No one can sell good shoes at such a price. I cannot understand it.

(Anna, mother of Lisbeth and Frieda, bursts into the room.)

Anna. Are Lisbeth and Frieda here?

Ralph. Lisbeth and Frieda?

Minna. We haven't seen them to-day.

Anna. I sent them on an errand early in the afternoon. They haven't come back, and it is now four o'clock.

Siegfried (comes running into the cottage).
Handa's lost!

All. Handa lost!

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

Siegfried. I went to her house and her mother asked me where she was. Handa started for our house this morning.

Handa's mother and father (come hurriedly into the cottage). Isn't Handa here?

Miller. We've heard news that frightens us.

All. Tell us quickly!

Miller. Handa, Lisbeth, and Frieda were seen at the peddler's stall early this afternoon. *Now he's gone.*

Miller's Wife. A villager heard the peddler calling out that he would give a pair of yellow shoes to any little girl who would try them on. He said he was giving away all his shoes because he was going to leave the village.

Anna. He's stolen our children. Oh, Ralph, help us! What shall we do?

Ralph. We'll begin the search now. Come, we'll search the village and the woods for miles around. All the villagers will help us.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

Siegfried. May I go, too, father? Do let me!

Ralph. No, lad. You stay and mind the house. And, friends, in case we do not find the children by midnight, let every one come back to the cottage and we'll make further plans.

(Ralph, Minna, Anna, the miller, and his wife start. Siegfried is left alone. He watches at the window for a while and then sits down and waits.)

SCENE IV

TIME: *Evening*

PLACE: *Same as Scene III*

Siegfried is alone in the cottage. He hears a sharp tap at the door. A little old woman opens the door and walks in.

Siegfried (frightened). Who are you?

Old Woman. I'm the Fairy Godmother of this village. I've come to tell you where to find Handa, Lisbeth, and Frieda.

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Siegfried. Good Fairy, where are they?
Where is Handa?

Old Woman. She and the other little maids are
in a cavern in the middle of the wood which
borders the village.

Siegfried. Did the peddler steal them? Oh,
let me run and find father. He will know
what to do.

Old Woman. No, no! Hear me, carefully.
The peddler shoemaker is a wicked wizard
who sold cheap, gaudy shoes in order to watch
his chance to steal the little girls. He will
make them work for him. Alas! that the vil-
lagers were deceived by this wicked peddler.
Alas! that they left their honest shoemaker to
deal with a wicked wizard. If you are brave
enough to follow my directions you can save
your little playmates.

Siegfried. I will, good Fairy. Tell me what
to do.

Old Woman. The peddler called to the little
girls and said that he wanted to give away the

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

few pairs of shoes that were left on his stall. He said he was going to leave. Lisbeth and Frieda coaxed Handa to go to the stall. The peddler gave them each a pair of yellow sandals and when the little girls put them on—off the sandals started and took the wearers to the cavern in the wood. In the cavern sit Handa and Lisbeth and Frieda. They cannot leave the cavern until some one breaks the wizard's spell by pulling off the magic yellow sandals.

Siegfried. I'll go. I'll start now. Tell me, good Fairy Godmother, how shall I reach the cavern? And where is the old peddler?

Old Woman. The peddler is in the cavern. He need not watch the little girls while they wear the yellow sandals because he knows the wearers cannot leave the cavern. So at present he is sleeping. His pointed shoes, which give him all his magic power, are standing near him. (*She takes out of her cloak a red cap.*) Here, I've brought you a cap. It will help you reach the cave—also, it will give you power to free your playmates. While the old

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wizard is sleeping, slip into the cave. Do not speak! Make signs to the little girls that they must not speak. Draw off the sandals, and hold fast to them. Bid the little girls follow you out of the cave.

Siegfried. I'll remember all that you say. I'm ready to start.

Old Woman. One more direction. Carry the wizard's pointed shoes away with you. When you reach the brook, fling into it the yellow sandals and the pointed shoes. Never again will the wizard practice his wicked art.

Siegfried. I'll do all that you say, good Fairy.

Old Woman. Ready, then. Bring the little girls back to your cottage. Farewell!

PANTOMIME

In a dimly lighted cavern located in the wood sit Handa, Lisbeth, and Frieda. The yellow sandals are on their feet. They are making shoes. The wizard is asleep. His pointed shoes stand near his side.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

Siegfried enters very softly. He holds his finger on his lips to caution the little girls not to speak. Quickly he jerks off their sandals, picks up the wizard's shoes, and signals to his playmates to follow him. They escape from the wizard's cave.

SCENE V

TIME: *About midnight*

PLACE: *Shoemaker's cottage*

Siegfried enters, followed by Handa, Lisbeth, and Frieda.

Handa. May we speak now, Siegfried?

Siegfried. Yes. There is nothing to fear now.

Lisbeth. Maybe he'll wake up and follow us.

Siegfried. He'll not follow us to the village.
I'm sure of that.

Frieda. Why did you take his pointed shoes, Siegfried?

Siegfried. The pointed shoes gave him all his magic power. I flung them and the yellow

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sandals into the brook. He'll never practice his wicked art again!

Handa. Oh, how happy I am to be here! Tell us how you saved us, Siegfried!

Siegfried. I'll tell you all about it. The Fairy Godmother helped me. Hark! I hear footsteps, and father's voice!

Minna. Siegfried! Handa! Ralph! What does this mean?

Ralph. Here are the children, friends.

(Miller, miller's wife, Anna, enter. Children rush into their parents' arms.)

Children (cry out). Siegfried saved us.

Handa. The wicked old peddler stole us, mother.

Lisbeth. He told us he was going to leave as soon as he could give away all his shoes. He gave us the yellow sandals and when we put them on, they ran away with us to his cave. Mother, Siegfried saved us.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

Frieda. Siegfried stole his magic shoes. He'll never steal any more little girls. We couldn't move away from the cave; we often sat like statues.

Handa. It all happened because you left Ralph and bought shoes of that wicked peddler.

Miller (goes up to Ralph). Handa is right. Can you forgive us, Ralph? Will you make our shoes again?

Miller's Wife. No one but Ralph shall ever sell *me* a pair of shoes again.

Anna. The old peddler used bad leather and did the poorest kind of work. Alas! that we ever left our faithful shoemaker. Siegfried, you're a brave lad! Tell us how it all happened.

Siegfried. After you left, the Fairy Godmother entered the cottage and told me the girls were prisoners in the peddler's cave. He's a wicked magician. The sandals he gave to Handa, Lisbeth, and Frieda ran away with the girls to his cavern. There they worked for him.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

The Fairy gave me this cap to wear. She said it would help me pull off the yellow sandals. And she told me when the wizard would be asleep and how to steal his magic pointed shoes. I flung the yellow sandals and his pointed shoes into the brook. All this the Fairy told me to do.

Miller. You're a brave lad. We can never repay you.

Handa. You should not have bought the wicked peddler's shoes. Look how shabby they are!

(Miller, miller's wife, Anna look at their shoes and shake their heads.)

Miller. Ralph, will you make new shoes for my wife and Handa and me?

Anna. And for each in my family, good shoemaker?

Ralph. Gladly, my friends.

Minna. Ralph, we shall not be obliged to leave the village now.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

Miller. Come—let us go home and to-morrow we'll come to be measured for shoes. You will be kept very busy for the next few weeks,
Ralph. We all need new shoes. Good night.

Ralph. }
Minna. } Good night.
Siegfried. }

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERD

TIME: *Reign of King John*

PLACE: *Palace of King*

CHARACTERS:

King John
Queen

Abbot of Canterbury
Shepherd

PLOT OF THE PLAY

King John hears of the great riches of the Abbot of Canterbury. He plans to punish the Abbot, for he believes the holy man has gotten his wealth in a dishonest way. The King decides that the Abbot must answer three questions which his Majesty gives. If he fails to give the correct answers to them, he will lose his head. The Abbot tells his trouble to his faithful shepherd, who offers to go, disguised as the Abbot, before the King and answer the three questions. The shepherd's wit wins the King's favor and saves the Abbot's head.

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERD

SCENE I

The King and Queen are seated in a palace.

Queen. Is the story true, your Majesty, that this Abbot of Canterbury has more riches at his command than you, the King of England?

King. There is no doubt about it. Every day rumor brings me news of his gorgeous palace and his wonderful retinue of knights.

Queen. A lady told me yesterday that fifty knights wait on him. She said that these followers are dressed in richest suits of velvet and wear chains of finely wrought gold.

King (*stamping his foot*). I'll put up with it no longer.

Queen. They say the people wait for hours to see the Abbot of Canterbury and his followers

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERD

ride. The beauty and grace of his horses is the talk of the country.

King. It is exasperating. He attracts the admiration which belongs to his King and Queen. He shall pay dearly for his insolence.

Queen. What will your Majesty do? You cannot cast him into prison without good reason.

King. I shall accuse him of treason.

Queen. Treason?

King. *Treason.* I believe his big fortune has been gained in a dishonest way. Who knows?

Queen. When does your Majesty expect him at court again?

King. I have sent for him, and am waiting for him now. I have a scheme in mind that will rid me of this rival.

(A page enters, steps before the King, and bows.)

Page. The Abbot of Canterbury is without and begs audience of your Majesty.

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERD

King. Bid the Abbot of Canterbury enter.

(Abbot of Canterbury enters, and bows to King and Queen.)

King. Strange rumors of thy wealth reach our ears, Father Abbot. It is said that thou keep-est a far better house than the King of England; that thy followers are dressed more richly than ours. What hast thou to say?

Abbot of Canterbury. My liege, I have nothing but what is lawfully my own. I trust your Grace will not blame me for spending what is mine.

King. It is hard for us to believe that this wealth is honestly yours. I suspect thee of treason, Sir Abbot.

Abbot of Canterbury. Treason, your Majesty?

King. So I have said, Sir Abbot. And unless thou canst answer clearly three questions, thou shalt stand accused of treason to the crown.

Abbot of Canterbury. Let me hear the questions, my liege

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERD

King. First, tell me where England's costliest land is. Secondly, tell me, without doubt, how quickly may the King ride around the whole world. Thirdly, tell me truly *what I think*.

Abbot of Canterbury. Sire, these are hard questions for my shallow wit. I cannot answer your Grace now, but if your Majesty will grant me a space of three weeks' time, I'll do my best to answer the questions.

King. The request is granted. Return in three weeks with the answers to my questions. If thou shouldst fail, know this: Thou shalt die and thy lands and all thy wealth shall be forfeited to the crown.

(Abbot of Canterbury bows his head.)

SCENE II

An open field. Abbot of Canterbury is returning home after an absence of nearly three weeks. He meets one of his shepherds.

Shepherd. Welcome home, Master Abbot.

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERD

Abbot. I thank thee, good, faithful shepherd.

Shepherd (looking into the Abbot's face).

Master, I fear you have heard some heavy news.

Abbot. I have but three days more to live, good shepherd.

Shepherd. But three days more? Is it, then, the King's decree, Master?

Abbot. His Majesty questions my right to the riches which are honestly mine. Almost three weeks ago the King commanded me to appear before him on a false charge of treason. To prove my innocence the King bade me answer truly three questions. I begged for three weeks' time and his Majesty granted my request. The time is up and I have failed to find answers to the questions.

Shepherd. Good master, have you asked the wise men of England?

Abbot (wearily). I have traveled for almost three weeks to see if I could get help, but all

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERD

in vain. The greatest scholars in England see no answer to the King's riddles.

Shepherd. Master, tell me these riddles.

Abbot. The first question is: Where England's costliest land is. The second is: How quickly may the King ride around the whole world. The third question is the hardest, for I must tell the King what he thinks. Good shepherd, thou seest that the questions cannot be answered.

Shepherd. Courage, Sir Abbot. Have you never heard that a fool may sometimes teach a wise man?

Abbot. Quite true, good shepherd.

Shepherd. Sir Abbot, grant me a favor.

Abbot. What dost thou wish?

Shepherd. Good master, let *me* appear before the King and answer these questions. (*Abbot shakes his head.*) Nay, do not deny me. Have I not served you faithfully?

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Abbot. Most faithfully, my good shepherd, therefore I cannot let thee risk thy life for me.

Shepherd. Good master, pardon me for speaking so freely. Often have I heard people say that the shepherd and the Abbot are very much alike. If you will lend me rich clothes, good horses, and serving men, I will appear before the King and answer his riddles. (*Abbot still shakes his head.*) Good master, do not question me, but trust me with this service.

Abbot (pauses, then says slowly). Thou shalt have thy wish, faithful servant. I trust no harm will befall thee.

Shepherd. Have no fear, good master.

SCENE III

The King and Queen are again seen seated in a room in the palace.

King. I've sent word to the Abbot that we must see him this morning.

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Queen. Think you that he will have wit enough to answer the questions?

King. He is not as rich in wit and wisdom as he is in horses and jewels.

Page (enters and bows). His Grace, the Abbot of Canterbury, awaits without.

King. Tell him we are ready to receive him. (*Shepherd, disguised as Abbot, enters and bows before King and Queen.*) Welcome, Sir Abbot. Thou art come to keep thy day. Now if thou canst answer my questions, thy life and thy living shall be saved. First: Tell me where is England's costliest bit of land?

Shepherd.

The costliest ground on the whole round earth
Let any true knight now tell its worth.
I declare the place where King John stands
Is the richest spot in all the lands.

King. A courtly answer, Sir Knight. Now tell me, without any doubt, how quickly I may ride around the whole world.



The Shepherd, disguised as Abbot, enters, and bows before the King and Queen.

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Shepherd.

You must rise with the sun and ride with the
same
Until the next morning he riseth again;
And then your grace need not make any doubt
But in twenty-four hours you'll ride about.

King (laughing). Thou hast a nimble wit.
I did not think it could be done so soon.
Come, now, let me have the answer to the
third question. Tell me here truly what I do
think.

(Shepherd throws off his disguise.)

Shepherd.

Yea, that shall I do, and make your grace
merry,
You think I'm the Abbot of Canterbury,
But I'm his poor shepherd, as plain you may see,
And I come to beg pardon for hi n and for me.

(King and Queen laugh heartily.)

Queen. Grant the pardon, my liege. His
clever wit deserves it.

King. Thy merry jest has earned thee a rich

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERD

reward. Come, choose a favor. Shall I make *thee* Lord Abbot in thy master's place?

Shepherd. Nay, my good Sire, I can neither read nor write.

Queen. Let him take word of your Majesty's pardon to the Abbot of Canterbury.

Shepherd. Gracious Queen, I ask no greater favor.

King. Thou shalt have four nobles¹ a week for life. And tell the Abbot of Canterbury that his faithful shepherd's merry jest earned King John's pardon.

¹A noble was an English coin worth \$1.61.



A ROYAL TOY-MENDER

TIME: *The day before Christmas*

PLACE: *A room in King Justforfun's palace*

CHARACTERS:

Justforfun, King of the Land of Lost Toys

Samuel Brown *Brownie Toy-mender*

Dorothy Brown *Pages to King*

Fairy Godmother *Children representing*

First Brownie Counselor *toys*

*Second Brownie Coun- *Heralds**
selor

PLOT OF THE PLAY

King Justforfun declares the children of men are growing too careless with their playthings. It is impossible for the brownies to mend all that come into the Land of Lost Toys, where all broken playthings are taken care of. The Fairy Godmother is sent to bring Sam and Dot Brown to the King's court, where they are to be tried for carelessness and willful destruction of toys. Some of the children's broken playthings suggest tit for tat punishment. Teddy Bear jumps up and says he was always treated very kindly. He calls attention to the fact that Sam is an expert mender of toys and pleads to have the boy appointed Toy-mender to the King. This will lessen the number of playthings that come to the Land of Lost Toys. The King agrees to accept Teddy's plan and allows the children to go home, where Sam, assisted by Dot, is to mend all the neighboring children's toys.

A ROYAL TOY-MENDER

SCENE: *A room in the King's palace. The King is seated on a throne in a room filled with all sorts of toys. The shabbiest toys are grouped near the throne. As the curtain rises, a page enters, and bows to the King.*

King. Come, sir, what do you wish?

Page. May it please your Majesty, your most skilled toy-mender begs a word with you.

King. Bid him enter. (*The attendant leaves. A brownie enters and bows to the King.*)
What is your desire, sir?

Brownie. It becomes my painful duty, your Majesty, to declare that the number of lost and broken toys is growing too fast. Since December twenty-fifth, one year ago, nine million, nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine toys have

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come into our workshop. And this morning there came such a load of broken toys, and badly broken they were, indeed, your Majesty, that we brownies are at our wits' end to know where to put them or how to make them whole again.

King (shaking his head). This is very serious. The lost and broken toys have been coming too fast—too fast into the Land of Lost Toys. I am determined to look into the cause of this (*pointing to the broken toys standing around*). Bid the Fairy Godmother come to me at once.

(Brownie bows and leaves. King walks up and down looking at the toys and shaking his head. Fairy Godmother enters.)

Fairy Godmother. I am at your service, your Majesty.

King. I have decided to punish the careless children who send so many broken toys into my kingdom. Only to-day such a load has come that my toy-menders are kept busy day

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and night looking after them. The Land of Lost Toys is full of every evidence of carelessness and heartless mutilation of beautiful playthings given for the children's amusement and joy—not for such willful destruction as this. I am determined to punish the culprits. Fairy Godmother, search for them until you find them. Then bring them to my court at once.

Fairy Godmother. I obey, your Majesty.

(Fairy Godmother leaves.)

King (to page). Conduct me to the brownies' workshop. I must see what can be done to relieve them there. Then tell my counselors to appear here at court when they hear the trumpet call.

(King and page leave. A brownie enters with an armful of mended toys. He begins to place these with the others.)

Brownie. Never saw such a load—little dolls, big dolls, rag dolls—woolly poodles—music boxes—teddy bears. Must have had a terri-

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ble crash—can't tell head from feet—such careless, thoughtless, heartless, senseless—oh, ho, here's the Fairy Godmother—I must slip away.

(*Fairy Godmother enters with Sam and Dot.*)

Fairy Godmother. Here we are in the Land of Lost Toys.

Dot and Sam. Land of Lost Toys?

Fairy Godmother. Yes, and you are at the King's court. Look about if you like. Perhaps you'll see what became of your old play-things when you grew tired of them and either carelessly broke them or thoughtlessly tossed them aside.

Sam. I thought they were taken to the attic.

Fairy Godmother. For a short time perhaps—but after awhile they all come to the Land of Lost Toys where the brownies mend them and renew their youth. You have been a willful destroyer of toys (*to Dot*). To be sure you

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are not so much to blame as your brother, but you *lent* him your precious toys without knowing what was to become of them.

Dot. Oh, good Fairy Godmother, Sam does not always break up our toys. He has often mended mine—indeed, he has.

Fairy Godmother. I am glad to hear that. But the King's command *must* be obeyed. So look about, you may see some old friends if your eyes are sharp. The toys will take no notice of you. After they enter the Land of Lost Toys they never speak to mortals without permission from the King.

Dot. Oh, Sam, Sam! There is my dear old rag doll which I lost last Christmas. Good Fairy, may I take her home with me? She looks as if she still loves me.

Fairy Godmother. Impossible. Toys are too happy here to think of leaving. They are all cared for most tenderly. Do you see she has a place of honor near the throne seat? That is because you played with her for three years.

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Dot. Yes, I loved her very much. Sam mended her for me many times. But one day I lost her. What are you laughing at, Sam?

Sam. Why, here's the walking-stick which grandfather lent me to play hobby-horse with.

Fairy Godmother. Yes, it came down to the Land of Lost Toys the day you left it lying on the pavement in front of your house.

Sam. And, oh, Dot! Here is my hobby-horse—my real one. Oh, good Fairy, I should like to take him back home with me. I wonder how he happened to come here.

Fairy Godmother. When your uncle gave you a bicycle, you neglected your hobby-horse shamefully—then he came down here. See how he frowns at you. No toy may be taken away from King Justforfun's land.

Dot. Here is the queerest toy. Is it a potato doll, Fairy Godmother?

Fairy Godmother. It is, and it has an interesting history.

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Dot and Sam. Do tell us what you know.

Fairy Godmother. It belonged to a poor little girl. This was her only plaything. You see she stuck two cinders into it for eyes, scraped a nose and mouth, and put an old rag around it for a dress. How she loved it and cared for it. It is in the highest place of honor.

Sam. How did she happen to lose it?

Fairy Godmother. Well, you see, after awhile the child grew old enough to go to work. One day while the little girl was away, some one swept the potato doll into the corner of the room. It was picked up with the rubbish and then it came down here. Toys never come here unless they are neglected, lost, or broken, and the longer they are cared for, the higher rank they take here. I'm sorry to say many toys come here the first day they are given to the children.

Sam. Oh, now I see why so many ugly things are near the throne, while many rich toys are in the corner.

A ROYAL TOY-MENDER

Fairy Godmother. Exactly. (*Trumpet sounds.*)
Hark! That is the King's signal for the brownies to attend him in this room where the trial is to be held.

Dot. Oh! dear! I'm so frightened. What is a trial? May I go home?—this is Christmas eve. Oh, Sam, why did you play earthquake with the toys and break so many of them!

Fairy Godmother. Don't cry or complain. You cannot escape without the King's consent and if you cry the trial may be put off.

Sam. And to-morrow's Christmas day. I'll never play earthquake with toys again. (*Trumpet sounds.*)

Fairy Godmother. Come, step into the ante-room until you are called.

(Dot and Sam leave. A herald enters blowing a trumpet. He is followed by the King of the Land of Lost Toys—pages, brownies, and two brownie counselors. The King takes the throne seat. The others group themselves in various places.)

A ROYAL TOY-MENDER

King. We have come together for a very serious purpose. It is known to all here that the number of broken and lost toys which have come to my kingdom in the last few days has grown beyond the strength of my workmen and beyond the capacity of my workshop. Therefore, I, King Justforfun, have decided to punish careless children who send toys here by the carload. Where are the culprits?

Fairy Godmother. They are in the ante-room, your Majesty. Sam Brown, and his sister Dot, who aided him in his destruction of toys, are waiting there.

King. I command them to appear.

(Herald leaves and returns with Sam and Dot.)

King. Here are the culprits, counselors. Proceed with the trial.

First Counselor. Your full names.

Sam. I'm Samuel Brown, sir.

Dot. I'm Dorothy Brown, Sam's sister.

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First Counselor. We will now hear why Samuel and Dorothy Brown are brought for trial to the court of King Justforfun.

Second Counselor. The offense is willful destroying of perfectly good toys—Samuel Brown will speak first.

Sam. Sirs, I thought old Santy would bring us heaps of new things to play with and I was sure we wouldn't need the old toys again.

King (shaking his head). It's just as I feared. Go on.

Sam. Dot let me have some doll furniture. I took my Noah's Ark, my best engine and track, my blocks, a tiny doll-house, and a tea-set.

Dot. I wouldn't let him take Rosalie, my doll.

First Counselor. Silence! Samuel Brown must not be interrupted. We will hear your story next. Proceed, Samuel Brown.

Sam. I wouldn't tell Dot what I was going to

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do with the toys. So while she was out of the room I arranged them all on a table which was covered with a green cloth. I made them look like a little city. Then I called Dot in.

Dot. Oh, it was a surprise.

First Counselor. Silence! Proceed, sir.

Sam. I told Dot that was the city I had been reading about in my book that very morning and I said we'd make-believe that a rumbling sound was heard just like the beginning of an earthquake. I rolled some croquet balls up and down a box to make the sound. Then came thunder, followed by a slight shock, which was soon followed by several other shocks. I rolled the balls again and pulled the table cloth that time. Finally with a good tug—the ground split and then came a jolly crash and—

King. A jolly crash, sir. So that's how it happened. It was dreadful—dreadful playing earthquake with beautiful toys. Come, let us hear Dorothy Brown's story.

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Second Counselor (to Dot). Dorothy Brown will tell in what way she helped with the earthquake game.

Dot. I wouldn't let him take Rosalie. I told him he could take anything else

Second Counselor. Did you help pull the tablecloth to make the earthquake?

Dot. No, sir.

Second Counselor. But you let him take your toys, some of the best ones—tea-set, doll's furniture, doll's house, and many others.

Dot. Yes, sir.

Second Counselor (to the King). Your Majesty, permit me to say that there is no very bad offense recorded for Dorothy Brown. She lent her precious playthings to her brother; but she did not *know* what naughty plan he had in his mind.

First Counselor (looks in record book). Permit me to say to your Majesty that in looking over

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the record of toys which belonged to her I find no complaint of carelessness except that act of this morning. I, therefore, recommend pardon for Dorothy Brown, as this is her first real offense.

King. I pardon Dorothy Brown. This visit to my kingdom will no doubt be a lesson to her. Proceed. What is the charge against her brother?

Second Counselor. Samuel Brown is charged with a very grave offense. He is a willful destroyer of toys. In order to enjoy what he called a *jolly crash* he planned an earthquake for his and his sister's old toys. In two moments he broke more than twenty playthings. This is not his first or second offense. I have looked over his record, and find such notes as indifference, carelessness, heartless mutilation, willful destruction written after many toys which were his.

First Counselor (to King). A very serious matter this is, your Majesty. Children of men are growing more careless every day. Toys



Teddy Bear jumps up and says he was always treated very
kindly.
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come to us by the hundreds, and many of them have been broken or lost on the very day they were given to the children.

King. A very serious state of affairs, indeed. What plan have my counselors to offer for punishment?

First Counselor. Your Majesty, the court begs to suggest that the destroyer of toys should be treated exactly as the toys were.

(Dot and Sam look frightened.)

King. A wise plan. The toys may speak.

(All toys begin to talk at once.)

First Counselor. Your Majesty, may we hear the complaints one at a time?

King. One at a time—silence.

(Toys are quiet.)

First Counselor. In turn each toy that belonged to Samuel Brown may describe the treatment received while in the possession of this little boy. Please to call on each one of Samuel Brown's toys.

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Second Counselor. Hobby-horse may speak.

Hobby-horse (bows to King and counselors). I beg to state that for the first few weeks after I was given to Samuel Brown, I was excellently treated; in fact, my little master preferred me to all his other toys. To be sure, I was kept on the trot from morning until night, but I enjoyed it. One day my saddle came loose. My heartless owner took long sharp tacks and hammered them into my back. Try it on him, say I! Try it on him! Then on his birthday he received a bicycle. I was left in a shed for weeks with no attention whatever. Finally, I came here.

Sam. I'm sorry, indeed I am.

Second Counselor. Tin Soldier may speak.

Tin Soldier. I'm glad it is my turn to speak. When Samuel Brown mended his hobby-horse's saddle he used me for a *hammer*. My features were all smashed and I've never looked the same since. Try it on him, I say!

Dot. Oh, please, sir, Sam was trying to *mend* his toys.

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First Counselor. Silence! Each toy shall be heard.

Second Counselor. Drum may speak.

Drum. And a sad tale I have to tell. After hammering on me in the most noisy way for two days Samuel Brown decided to have a "jolly bang." He put me in the middle of the floor and with both his feet jumped on me. Of course there *was* a *bang* which could be heard all over the house. Then he laughed in my face. Try it on him. Try it on him.

Second Counselor. Indian Boy may speak.

Indian Boy. He scalped me one day and then never played with me again. Tit for tat, say I. Tit for tat.

Second Counselor. Mechanical Toy may speak.

Mechanical Toy (in a squeaky voice). Your honor, I've never felt quite right in my inside since Samuel Brown took me to pieces to see what made me move.

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Dot. Oh, please, sir, he wanted to learn how to mend his toy if it should be broken. He often mends the toys for the children that live near us. Indeed, he does. How sorry he is for all he has done.

Mechanical Toy. That does not excuse him. Treat him as he treated me. Let's have justice. Take him to pieces to see what makes him move.

Second Counselor. Teddy Bear may speak.

Teddy Bear (looking around). Have you all finished? Then I have a word to say. No Teddy Bear in all the world was ever treated better than I was when I lived with this little master. One evening my left ear was caught under a chair. The maid pulled at me roughly and nearly tore my ear off. Samuel Brown carefully stitched it on. And again, when the terrier pup's sharp teeth tore and ripped me open, my little master carried me into the nursery and with loving care he stuffed me and sewed me up. I was his playmate for three long years and you all know that is a

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good long life, in the world of children, for a Teddy Bear.

Sam. I don't know how I ever lost you, Teddy Bear, indeed I don't. I hunted you for several weeks.

Teddy Bear. Quite true. You see I had become bald from old age and the hair on my body was beginning to fall out. One day some one decided it would be necessary to put me in the attic. Then naturally after awhile I came here. When you talk about tit for tat please consider my case. If it would not offend the court I have a plan to suggest.

First Counselor. What is your Majesty's will in this matter?

King. We'll hear Teddy Bear's plan. He usually says something worth hearing.

Teddy Bear. You have heard several times about this lad's skill in *mending* toys. Now if your object to-day is really to lessen the number of toys that come into the kingdom, why don't you make Samuel Brown your Royal

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Toy-mender? Send word to Santa Claus to leave him tools, glue, paint, and all other things needed to mend toys. That is the way to lessen the number of toys that come to the kingdom; your Majesty, I humbly offer this plan.

King. And a fine plan it is, Teddy Bear; quite worthy of your good sense. What say my counselors?

First Counselor. Please, your Majesty, may we hear what Samuel Brown himself has to say?

King. Samuel Brown may tell us what he thinks of Teddy Bear's plan.

Sam. I'll gladly become a mender of toys, your Majesty. I'll do my best to keep all the toys in our neighborhood in good order.

Dot. And I'll help him! Indeed I will. He is a very clever workman.

First Counselor. Does the plan satisfy the toys who have spoken?

Toys. Ye-e-e-e-s!!

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Teddy Bear. Then let us all give a hearty cheer for the lad who is to be a *toy-mender* instead of a *toy-breaker*.

Toys. Hurrah for Samuel Brown, Toy-mender to our King!

King. Fairy Godmother, lead the children to their home and may they have a happy Christmas day!

(Toys call out, "Merry Christmas," and children call back, "Merry Christmas," as they go out with the Fairy Godmother.)

THE NEW NEW YEAR

TIME: *New Year's eve*

PLACE: SCENES I AND III. *Old Year's office*
SCENE II. *Tom and Mary's home*

CHARACTERS:

<i>Old Year</i>	<i>Mary</i>
<i>New Year</i>	<i>Peggy</i>
<i>Twelve Months</i>	<i>Jack</i>
<i>Grandmother</i>	<i>Tom</i>

PLOT OF THE PLAY

The New Year decides to be entirely different from all preceding New Years. He is going to please the children by giving them all kinds of weather at once. Then they may choose the kind of weather they like best. The New Year calls in all the months and tells them to begin work at once and all together. They do so and the result is that the weather changes many, many times in a day. The children are very much disappointed and the New Year is obliged to change his plan to the natural order of things.

THE NEW NEW YEAR¹

SCENE I

The business office of New Year. A large desk, with many pigeonholes filled with papers, faces front, a chair stands before it; and a clock, and large calendar bearing the word December, hang on the wall. Old Year busy getting things in order—general confusion of papers as telephone rings.

Old Year. Hello! No, not New Year yet—I'm still here. Yes, just trying to get things in shape for him. Oh, tell *him* when he comes; you know he takes my place. Yes (*looks up at clock*), in a few minutes. Good-bye and good luck to you. (*Sound of sleigh-bells is heard outside—then a knock on the door.*) Oh, there he is! Well, the little fellow's had a cold journey. (*Old Year shuffles to the door and opens it.*) Come in!

¹ Published in *St. Nicholas*, January, 1918. Used by permission of the Century Company.

THE NEW NEW YEAR

New Year. Here I am (*clapping his cold hands to warm them*). I didn't keep you waiting, did I? January *wouldn't* drive faster.

Old Year. No, no! Sit down, Master New Year. You're here soon enough—too soon, I was going to say. I meant to have all things in readiness for you—such a busy year as it has been (*goes on with his task*). There was plenty to do—not half time enough. But I must soon be off, so I'd better tell you some things you ought to know. See (*lifting up a roll of paper*), here are only a few of the things I planned to do. Dear me, and none are finished! But you'll see to them.

New Year. Yes, yes, don't bother; I'll see to *everything*. I mean to do great things while I'm here. I shall be a real New Year—like nothing there has been before.

(*New Year walks up and down. Old Year stops his work a moment to look at him.*)

Old Year. Humph! I thought so, too, when I was your age. But you won't be able to do

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much with the weather, youngster (*shaking his head*). You know you have *that* to attend to, don't you? No small matter, either. The months are a troublesome lot—the twelve of them—always treading on each other's toes. I had no end of work to keep March in his place. But I did very well, indeed!

New Year. Yes, yes, I am sure you did.

Old Year. It's a task to please the people. They're quite as troublesome as the months are—quite. (*New Year stops to listen.*) When it's wet they want it dry, and when it's cold they want it warm.

New Year. Dear me!

Old Year. The children are a little easier to please. Still, once when I sent a warm spring day some little boys wanted to go nutting and were quite cross about it; and I heard a little boy (*lowering his voice*) not far from here wish, one fine summer day, that the ground was covered with snow so that he could take his sled out; and his little sister said she wished

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it was *Christmas every day*. There's no pleasing all of them. But I did my best to give them what they wanted (*looks at the clock*). Well, well, it's nearly time for me to take myself off, and I haven't told you half enough.

(*Old Year begins to put on his cloak and move toward the door.*)

New Year. Oh, I understand—I'll give them exactly what they want. Good-bye.

Old Year. (*Turns back.*) That reminds me, I almost forgot about those new promises the people made when I came. I wrote them down carefully (*goes back to desk and seems to be hunting something*). Here they are—right in the same place (*takes them out and dusts them*). Don't see much change here. Well, good night. Oh, I declare! there's my calendar still on the wall. (*Old Year goes to get it. New Year runs to take it down, but he can't reach it.*) Thank you just the same, my little fellow. There's a new one on the desk for you. (*Old Year bows. New Year walks toward desk and thumbs calendar pad*

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hurriedly.) Give the months their proper time and all will be well.

New Year (impatiently). Yes, yes, Old Year. I'll give them their time—I'll look after everything.

Old Year. (Starts—puts head back in door.) Try to please the children—give them all the good weather you can. Don't bother much about the grown-ups. Good night, my little Master New Year; good night. Remember the children.

New Year. Yes, yes—good night—good night. This shall be the happiest New Year the children have ever had. (*Sound of sleigh-bells is heard as Old Year leaves. New Year sits thinking.*) "Try to please the children—" Of course I shall, but dear me! One likes it hot and the other likes it cold; I never can please them all unless (*telephone rings*)—Hello! Yes, yes, I am New Year—good luck to you! Oh, new promises—yes—just tell them to me and I'll remember them. Yes—people are *not* going to

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be *careless*, or *cross* this year—they *are not* going to *complain*—and the children are *not* going to break their toys—they're going to school every day—and get their lessons—and they are never going to quarrel. That's wonderful! Yes—oh, I'll remember them all; good-bye! (*New Year sits down.*) Dear me! All the world was waiting for me to come, and what a wonderful year this will be. The children are not going to break any rules this year, I'm sure. They *deserve* to have all the good weather I can give them. They shall have the weather they like best. How can that be unless I give them all kinds of weather at the same time and let them choose for themselves? (*Thinking.*) That's the way! If each month could do his work now—instead of—I wonder how they have been doing it! Never mind—if all the months could do their work together, the children could choose for themselves—they needn't wait for their fun. It would be a whole year just the same—twelve times one is the same as one times twelve, no matter how the months come; and they'd far better be at work. That would be a different year—it

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would be a real New Year; why, it would be a *new* New Year. I'll call January in and tell him my plan. (*He goes to the door.*) Come in, January.

January. Good luck to you (*bows*). Well, Old Year's gone, is he, Master New Year?

New Year. I am the new New Year, January. I mean to make this the very happiest year for the children. They deserve it. January, the children are not going to be careless this year or cross; they are not going to quarrel or break their toys, and—well, I can't think of half the things they said they were going to do and not going to do. Did you ever hear of anything so wonderful, January?

January. Yes. (*Slowly.*) I think I have heard something that sounds much like *that*.

New Year. It's wonderful! So I've thought of a plan to please them. I'm going to let all the months do their work together—now, *at once*. Then each little boy and girl may choose the weather he or she likes best.

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January (shaking his head). Better not, better not—you know we've never done it that way before.

New Year. Of course not! This is to be a *new New Year.*

January. It is, indeed! But I don't mind the change, I think I rather like it; provided, of course, that I may send all the snow and ice I wish and that I shall always be honored as the *first* month of them all.

New Year. Quite right, January, that can be easily managed. (*New Year starts toward the door and turns back.*) Oh, do tell me the names of the other months, January.

January. I haven't the slightest idea. I know I'm always waiting for December to get out of the way, and I hear people talking about February long before I am gone. But I have little to do with the others.

New Year (walking up and down). Old Year spoke about March.

January. Oh, yes, I've heard his name. When-

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ever I've given a particularly good blow, people say I am as mad as a March day.

New Year. Be so kind as to call the ones you know, January.

January (goes to the door). December went down the road with Old Year. He may not be back yet. But I'll call him, too. (*Calls*) February! March! December!

New Year (repeating and counting on his fingers). February, March, December, and January—that's four; there are eight more! (*A bluster is heard, and the three months enter. December looks sleepy and tired.*) Oh, there you are! Come in, and greetings to you, my months.

February and March (in one breath). What does this mean? Am I late? Why am I called?

New Year. No, oh no! we are to have a new New Year. You see, I have thought of a plan to please all the children while I am here. They are to have exactly the weather they like

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best. You, February, and December, and March, are to do your work now instead of coming—well, coming as you have always come before.

March (whirling around the room). Hol ho!
That's jolly!

December (waking up). Nonsense! the children have just had their Christmas trees. Some are still enjoying the Christmas fun. They won't wish to see me so soon again, I'm sure.

New Year. Oh, yes, they will, Dcember! I heard about a little girl who said she wanted Christmas every day.

February. It's all right if I am not hurried off. I have less time than any of the others.

New Year. Take as much time as you like, February. Old Year told me to give each month his time, and I shall!

March. A jolly plan, say I again. But where are the others?

New Year. That's exactly what I want to know. Can you tell me who they are?

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March (skipping). There are April, May, June, July, August, September, October, and November. (*All watch March anxiously.*)
Ho! Ho! You see I know them all.

New Year. So you do. It's wonderful! How did you learn them, March?

March. Oh, I go skipping about everywhere, so I have a blowing acquaintance with them all. You see, I'm off for a madcap galloping chase—to make a commotion in every place. And there was a time when I was the first month (*bowing elaborately to January*) in every New Year. (*All look at January.*)

January (indignantly). It must have been long ago!

March. All the other months will like to come. April will cry, perhaps, for being wakened so soon, and May and some of the others will shiver a little from the cold. But what of that! They'll all like the sport.

New Year. Very well—call them in, March.
(*March calls at the door. New Year tries to*

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keep count of them on his fingers. December, January, and February stand together and talk. A murmur is heard and the months file in. April is crying, May, June, July, and August shiver. All look cheerful, but confused. They group themselves in seasons, but do not seem to know those out of their season.)

Greetings, my months! (*All bow.*) Now that we are all here together, I'll tell you why I have called you. We are to have a new New Year. Each one of you is to do his work now—at once—for I want to give the children a chance to choose just the weather they like best. One likes it hot, you know, and another likes it cold. My new plan will let them choose what they wish—snow—flowers—nuts—birds—anything!

March (breaking in). Hurrah! Hurrah! a jolly plan, say I again.

(All chatter among themselves.)

January. Of course, I shall send plenty of snow and ice—all I wish.

May. But I can't get ready in time—I shall have to wear last year's dress.

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New Year. That will do quite as well, April—quite as well.

May. I'm May, if you please, sir. I was planning so much for the children—birds and buds and flowers. Dear me! But I'll do my best.

October. Ha! Ha! That reminds me of the nuttings I was planning for them. I once heard a little boy say, "Hurrah for nuts! October's the month for me!"

New Year. Won't it be jolly! And now (*to November*) what can you do?

November. Not much, I fear. You know what they say about November:

"No sun—no moon,
No morn—no noon,
No shade—no butterflies—no bees—
No—vember."

But if September will have the fruit ready—

New Year (turning to September). Yes, yes, September.

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September. Have the fruit ready! Never fear. Oh, yes, and the children may have their starting to school over again. How often I have heard them say: "Hurrah for September—school has begun!"

June. Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! You'd never say that if you knew what I hear them say, "Hurrah for June—school's out!" I'll cover the trees with plenty of leaves, and give the children fine woods and meadows and fields to play in—and plenty of holidays.

New Year. Fine! Fine! But dear me, they promised to go to school every day this year. No matter. Perhaps I ought to have known more about your plans for the children this year, but the time is short—now go at once and begin your work. Remember, plenty of flowers and snow and birds and ice and nuts—and Christmas every day—whatever they wish!

All (going out helter-skelter). Good luck to our new New Year! Good night! Good night!

(New Year sits alone, thinking.)

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SCENE II

A few days later. Room in a home. A Christmas tree is in one corner. Tom is mending his sled.

Mary (running in). Tom! Tom! It's bright again out doors. You'll have your sled mended in time for the coasting, won't you? Grandmother says she's sure they can come now. It will be like having a Christmas party all over again, won't it?

Tom. It's no Christmas party—we're going to coast. Besides, this is January, and you don't have Christmas parties in January. You want Christmas every day, *you do!*

Mary. But we haven't taken down our tree yet, and it's a Christmas party if you have a Christmas tree—grandmother said so. (*Grandmother enters.*) Tom says it isn't like a Christmas party, grandmother. He says you can't have a Christmas party in January.

Grandmother (going toward the window).

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Well, it looks to me as though the weatherman had mixed things up so badly these days that one can have almost anything he wishes and call it whatever he pleases. January seems to have a dozen minds at once (*looks out window*). There's no telling, at times, whether it's winter or summer, Christmas or May-day. But it looks clear now. I believe I see Peggy coming down the road.

Mary (looking out). Yes, it's Peggy, and she has her new sled, Tom!

Grandmother. Run and open the door, Mary.

(Mary opens the door and Peggy enters.)

Mary. Oh, Peggy! the hill is covered with snow and we may take our sleds out.

Grandmother. How do you do, Peggy? Come to the fire and warm yourself. You look perished.

Peggy. Oh, I'm shivering! It was so warm when I started. I didn't want to wear my coat. Mother made me take it. But I was

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glad I had it, for the wind began to blow bitterly in no time.

Grandmother. Dear me, I do hope you didn't take cold! Such weather! As soon as Tom finishes his sled you may all go coasting.

Tom. Jack isn't here yet.

Mary (runs to the window). Oh, here he comes, and with his sled, too! He's running. Look, Peggy!

Grandmother. Then come, children, get ready. Now for coats and caps—don't forget your overshoes. There's no telling any minute when the weather-man will change his mind. Mary, I'll help Peggy while you find your wraps. Tom, let Jack in.

Tom (opens door). Come in, Jack.

Jack. Hurrah for the snow!

Mary. Oh, is it snowing? Good! Good!

Grandmother. Then hurry, children! you may get a sleigh-ride this time.

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Peggy (who is ready, runs to the window). Oh, dear, look outdoors, Mary! It's raining! Why, it's raining hard—we can't go!

Mary (running to the same window). Can't go, Peggy!

Jack (runs to opposite window). Nothing of the sort—it's snowing!

Tom (joins Jack). Ha! you girls don't know snow from rain.

Mary. It's raining, pouring! Grandmother, come here and see if we are not right! Oh, dear!

(Grandmother rushes to Mary's window.)

Tom. Come here, grandmother, and see the snow!

(Grandmother rushes to Tom and Jack's window.)

Grandmother. Dear, dear! I do declare, I can't tell what it is doing! But I am sure something's coming down fearfully. No

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coasting to-day, children. I'm afraid this will melt all the snow. Take off your wraps, for the sky looks ready to drench everything.

Mary. We can't go! (*Cries.*)

Peggy. Mother said she didn't know what it would do next, but I wanted to come, anyway.

Grandmother (helping them take off wraps).
It's of no use. I thought it was as mild as a summer day a short time ago, but look at it now! (*Children look out again.*)

Peggy. Why, there's the sun, and out of doors it's bright again!

Mary (clapping her hands). Oh, good! good!

Grandmother. Well, well, well! What a turn again! I wonder if it's fooling us this time. To make sure, I'll go right outdoors myself and see.

(*Grandmother leaves the room. Children hurry into their wraps.*)

Tom. We'll have our coasting yet, see if we don't.

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Grandmother (comes back). Bless me, it is like a summer day again. If I didn't think it sounded foolish, I'd say there was a look of green on the trees and I thought I heard a bird sing. (*A gust of wind rattles the windows as the children are ready to start.*) Hark! That's the wind, Tom, look out.
(*Children rush to windows.*)

Jack. Look at that big black cloud!

Mary. And it's *raining*—oh, dear, dear!
(*Cries.*)

Grandmother. There it is again! The wind's getting up now.

Tom. It's enough to blow you off your feet.

Peggy. See those children run with their sleds!

Grandmother. It seems to me that all the months have gone mad together. (*Goes from window to window.*) January wasn't like this when I was a girl. We had snow, snow, snow—and no fooling about it. You must stay at home, children, so take off your wraps

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again and have as much fun indoors as you can. There's the Christmas tree—play it's a Christmas party.

Peggy. I've had my Christmas tree.

Mary. I don't want a Christmas party.

Tom and Jack. Neither do we, and we haven't had a sleigh-ride since Christmas.

Grandmother. Well, we must make the best of bad weather, I suppose. I'll go round and see that all the windows are fastened. They rattle as if they were out of their wits. It sounds like a mad March day.

(Grandmother leaves the room. Mary cries—the other children stand looking out of the windows disgusted.)

SCENE III

New Year's office. New Year is walking up and down looking puzzled and worried. Telephone rings.

THE NEW NEW YEAR

New Year. Hello! Yes, November, any trouble? Lots of grumbling! Nothing to do! That's strange. Didn't September get the fruit ready? (*Knock is heard.*) Wait a moment till I see who's knocking. (*Lays down receiver; goes to door, January enters.*) Oh, it's you, January. Come in, and good luck to you!

January (crossly). Good luck! Don't call this good luck, do you?

New Year. Why, what's the trouble, January?

January. Trouble! It's all a fearful mix-up.

New Year. Dear me! and November has just told me he has nothing to do. What am I to think?

January. Nothing to do? There's plenty to do if one got a chance to do anything. You can't tell who you are or what you're doing these days. No matter how much snow I send, it's soon melted. Why, the children haven't had one sleigh-ride since I arrived.

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New Year. That's too bad!

January. And they're all sneezing and coughing.

New Year. Why, that's really shocking! What do you mean to do about it, January?

January. What do I mean to do? It wasn't my plan.

New Year. You said you wouldn't mind the change. You were quite willing.

January. But I told you we had never done it that way before—that you'd better not. You wouldn't let us go on in the old way.

New Year. The old way? I didn't know the old way. March said he liked it, too. Where is he?

January. Everywhere, as usual.

New Year. I'll see if I can get him in. (*Calls. March comes in.*)

March. Oh, ho, I've had a blustering good time! What's up now?

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New Year. Everything, March. There's a good deal of grumbling, and January says things are so mixed up that no one knows who he is or what he is doing. We must do something. Perhaps you'd better call them all in and see if we can find out what is the trouble.

March. Oh, I'll bring them in—never fear!
(*March goes to the door, calls months. New Year steps up to calendar and thumbs pad interestedly. Months come in helter-skelter—cross and out of sorts.*)

New Year. Greetings, my months! (*All bow.*) You must tell me what is the trouble.

Chorus of Months. Couldn't send flowers—don't know what we're doing—not a bud—or nut!

New Year. Silence, silence! Please.

January (to months). It's all a mistake.

New Year. Yes, yes, of course it is! Please speak one at a time—that's always the best way.

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March. Jolly plan. (*Skipping.*)

December (to March). No one had even a bit of a chance with you blustering around.

New Year. Come, come! I see I must call on you by name and give each one of you his turn to speak. October, did you give the children a chance to go nutting?

October. To go nutting? There wasn't a nut on the trees to ripen. There were no leaves to color—in fact, there wasn't even one leaf—the trees were bare.

New Year (turning to June). This is shocking. June, you were to attend to the leaves.

June. No sooner had my leaves and grass begun to have a look of green than January's and February's snow nipped them. The children had no meadows, no fields, no woods to play in. They might just as well have been in school.

September. But they didn't go to school. They said they couldn't tell whether it was

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vacation or not. And there wasn't a bit of fruit to get ready. I had nothing whatever to do!

November. Nor did I!

New Year. But didn't April plant the seeds, and didn't May call out the buds on the trees and bring back the birds? Where's April?

May. She's crying again. She did try to do her part, but January's cold was too sharp for the seeds; and February scared away my buds and birds; and bits of December's Christmas-trees were scattered all over my gardens. No one ever had such a dreadful time before. I didn't even feel *welcome!*

New Year. December, what have you to say about that?

December. It was all March's fault. There was no doing anything with him.

Chorus of Months. He tore off the buds and branches—he scattered the seeds—

March. Oh, I just caught the trees by the

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branches and shook them a rough, friendly greeting.

New Year. Well, well, we must get things back in the right order somehow! Advise me, January, you are the first month and know best.

January. Let the months take their turn, one at a time, as they have always done. I shall come first, of course. I'm first on every calendar.

New Year (looking at calendar closely). So you are, January, but they are *all* here—*altogether!*

January. Of course they are (*thumbing the calendar*), but look—they're *one at a time*—one *after* the other.

New Year (turning the pages). So this is the old way. Here's January's name first. It says:

January, thirty-one days, snow and ice.
February, twenty-eight days, snow and ice.

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March, thirty-one days, month of winds.

March (skipping). And after me come April and May.

New Year. Silence, March! I see we shall have to go back to the old order of things, that is the only way to set it all right. Yes, I have decided, my months, that you are to do your work *one at a time*. (*Aside*) I wonder I didn't think of that before. Hang up the calendar, January; I can't reach up—yet. (*January hangs up the calendar.*) Now call out the names in order, January, one at a time; and you, my months, take your places in line.

January (turning calendar leaves). February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December. .

New Year. Take your place first, January. Do your work now, *at once*. The others may go and wait their time. Be ready to come *one at a time*. Good luck to you, and remember the children!

(*Months pass out calling, "Good-bye" and*

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"Good luck." New Year stands watching them go, waving his hand. After they have left he sits thinking. Soon the sound of sleigh-bells is heard outside, then shouts of children's voices.)

New Year (starting up). There are the children! (*Runs to window.*) Ha! ha! See the snow! Good for you, January! Now for a happy time, children—ice and skating and snow, snow everywhere, and a greeting to you all from a happy New Year!

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

NICK BLUSTER'S TRICK

(Page 1)

This is a one-act spring play which may be given out of doors. Sweet Briar Dell may be any bit of garden scenery. South Breeze's cave may be rudely constructed from boughs, on the bank of an imaginary brook.

The Queen and her maidens come into the scene carrying baskets filled with bits of colored paper out of which they fashion the flowers. The maidens lead the Queen to a throne seat covered with green.

Nick Bluster puffs out his cheeks and blows vigorously, while Jack Frost skips about and touches the maidens with his ice scepter.

Costumes

Queen of Spring: Green gauze gown, coronet of spring blossoms.

The Queen's Handmaidens:

Merry Sunshine: Bright yellow gown.

Morning Mist: Pale rose-colored gown.

Evening Dew: Gown of rainbow colors.

Silver Shower: Soft warm gray gown.

South Breeze: Pale blue cloak.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

Jack Frost: A suit of white covered with cotton and glittering powder. He carries a small white stick—his ice scepter.

Nick Bluster: Long, loose cloak of thin dark gray material.

CICELY AND THE BEARS

(Page 17)

This variant of the Cinderella legend is presented in three scenes.

Scene I: Stalls bearing fruit and vegetables suggest a market-place. Cicely, a beggar girl, carries a tray of flowers.

Scene II: A gate constructed of wood or cardboard represents the porter's gate to the castle.

Scene III: A large room with a platform on one side. A table bearing cakes and cherries is in the center. Cicely watches the gayeties from behind a curtain. The Bears, growling, enter from a hall which adjoins the room.

Costumes

Sir Nicholas Hildebrand: Tights, jerkin, and scarlet cloak; pointed shoes, hat with feather, etc.

Bellman: Blue tights, hood, and jerkin trimmed with gold lace. He carries a bell or gong.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

Porter: Brown tights and jerkin. Cap with feather.

Two Bears: Dark brown burlap may be used for sack-like coat—hood with points for ears, leggings and shoes. If obtainable, use brown fur for the disguise.

Cicely: Very ragged dress and shoes. Her hair should be very thick, dark, and curly. It should be tousled.

Citizens: Tights, jerkins, pointed shoes, and caps or hats.

Dames and Maidens: Long waisted, very full dresses of various colors.

Pages and Attendants: Tights and jerkins of bright colors.

THE HAPPY BEGGAR

(Page 39)

The King's room may be represented by a few pieces of rich furniture. The grumbling King is propped up in a large invalid chair. All who attend him are frightened at his surly manner.

Costumes

King: A rich lounging robe of royal purple. A tinsel crown is awry on his head. He carries a scepter.

Queen: Wears a crown and a rich trailing robe.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

Court Physician and First Assistant: Plain black suits.

Wise Man: Long scarlet cloak, scarlet cap.

Nurse: Plain white dress and cap.

Page and King's Valet: Knee breeches of bright velvet, loose white blouse, wrist and neck ruffles.

A Happy Beggar: Ragged coat and trousers. Coat buttoned up around the throat.

PROFESSOR FROG'S LECTURE

(Page 57)

The dialogue in this play offers excellent practice for reading. A pair of goggles and a short pointer distinguish Professor Rana. Groups of children hop into a circle around Bobby, who is lying on his back gazing dreamily overhead.

There is no change of scene. A portion of the schoolroom marked off with chalk represents a meadow pond. A small elevation or portion of platform serves for the mossy log on which the frogs and toads sit. Professor Rana stands near his specimen and points to it as he speaks.

In case this play is given for an out of door entertainment, the following suggestions may be used:

Costumes

Bobby: White trousers, bright colored shirt, large white collar, very large brimmed hat.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

Professor Rana: Green suit, white vest, goggles, pointer.

Mrs. Bufo: Dark brown dress.

In the group, frogs are dressed in green with white vests; toads, in plain brown.

COCK-ALU AND HEN-ALIE

(Page 75)

This play may be given out of doors or in a schoolroom. In order to simplify the matter of costumes, each child may wear a pasteboard card on which is printed the name of the character represented.

Scene I: Bits of straw and hay scattered about suggest a barnyard.

Scene II: Trees and bushes represent the woodland.

MOTHER AUTUMN AND NORTH WIND

(Page 95)

This is a one-act autumn play which may easily be given out of doors. Sprays of autumn foliage decorate the place. The Days are coloring autumn fruits, leaves, and flowers. Various pretty dances may be introduced.

Costumes

Autumn Days: Cloaks of crimson, orange, brown, yellow, dark tan, and scarlet.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

Mother Autumn: Purple cloak of soft material.

Frost Fairies: White outing flannel covered with diamond dust.

North Wind: Gray cloak of gauze. He plays on a reed pipe.

King Winter: An old man in white cloak covered in diamond dust.

THE ONE-EYED SERVANT

(Page 109)

Scene I: One or two porch chairs suggest the outside of an untidy cottage. The fairy shoemaker is working behind a bush which stands near. Sally hears his tap, tap. The audience sees the partly hidden little man, who wears a red cap. He is making a fairy shoe.

Scene II: The interior of a neat, tidy cottage. A bowl of curds stands waiting for the little stranger.

Costumes

Sally: In first scene she wears a plain dress and is very untidy. In second scene she is very clean and tidy.

Fairy Shoemaker: Brown suit, red cap. He cannot be seen when his cap is on. When he talks to Sally he holds his cap in his hand. He carries a small hammer and piece of leather.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

LITTLE REBELS

(Page 123)

Scene I: An outdoor winter scene may be suggested by the clothes of the children. They are warmly dressed and carry skates.

Scene II: A desk and chair may suggest the office of General Gage.

Costumes

The boys have mufflers around their necks and wear heavy coats and shoes.

General Gage, officers, and soldier wear the regulation British suits.

EVERYDAY GOLD

(Page 133)

Scene I: Simple furniture suggests a cottage kitchen. A cupboard where one of the brownies hides must be at one side. Grandmother is knitting; Mary is sweeping. A door and window at the back serve as exits and entrances.

Scene II: Brown hangings suggest a cave. A pot hangs over a fire.

Costumes

Grandmother: Plain dress, white hair, glasses.

Mary: A large apron covers a simple dress.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

Mary's friends and village children in plain clothes.

The children wear aprons of different colors.

The Brownies: Brown suits, large shoes, caps, white beards. They carry large stuffed bags.

THE VILLAGE SHOEMAKER

(Page 167)

Scene I: A workroom in a simple little cottage. Ralph, the shoemaker, sits at work making shoes in the old-fashioned way. On a flat stone he is hammering a piece of wet leather. His tools lie near on a bench.

Scene II: An open space on the green near the village mill. A wrinkled old man is standing behind a stall piled up with shoes of all colors. He calls out to the villagers who pass.

Scenes III, IV and V: Same as Scene I.

Following Scene IV is a tableau and bit of pantomime. Dark draperies represent the cavern where the little girls are at work. The old wizard is asleep. His magic shoes stand near him.

Costumes

Ralph: Plain suit, shoemaker's leathern apron. The children and villagers wear suitable village costumes. The wizard or peddler shoemaker wears a long dark cloak, pointed hat, and shoes.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERD

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In the King's room may be two throne chairs for the King and Queen. Any open space may represent a field.

Costumes

King: Rich jerkin, velvet trousers, and purple cloak. A crown should be on his head and a scepter in his hand.

Queen: Rich gown, trimmed with soft white cotton flannel, and dashed with markings of charcoal to represent ermine. A crown should be on her head.

Abbot of Canterbury: Rich red cloak and hat.

Shepherd: Shepherd's brown cloak. He carries a crook in his hand.

A ROYAL TOY-MENDER

(Page 203)

Scene I: A seat covered with a rug suggests the King's throne. The room is filled with toys, and the shabbiest ones are near the King's throne. The trial is held in this room. The brownie counselors have desks on which lie record books. Here they have accounts of children who are careless with their toys.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

Costumes

King: Purple velvet cloak trimmed with ermine.

He wears a crown and carries a scepter.

Sam and Dot wear present day clothes.

Fairy Godmother: Scarlet cloak, high pointed cap.

Brownie Counselors: Brown suits, long brown cloaks, large shoes, caps.

Brownie: Tight brown suit, very large shoes.

Page: Bright colored tights, velvet jerkin, ruffles at wrists and neck.

Herald: Tights, jerkin, short cape. He carries a trumpet.

Children representing toys wear a card on which is printed Hobby-horse, Drum, etc. Teddy Bear wears rough brown suit.

Tin Soldier: Suit of gray, brass buttons.

Indian: Indian suit, moccasins, feathers.

THE NEW NEW YEAR

(Page 227)

Scenes I and III: Old Year's office should have a desk with pigeonholes stuffed with papers. On the desk stands a telephone. In full view is a calendar with date December 31 on it.

Scene II: Room in Tom and Mary's house: a door at the back of stage and a window in right and left walls. Tom is mending his sled.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

Costumes

The New Year: Suit of black velvet, bright new buttons, white blouse.

Old Year: Long dark gray cloak on old man with flowing white hair and beard.

Twelve Months:

Three Winter Months: Glittering white outing flannel and cotton sprinkled with diamond dust.

Three Spring Months: Green gauze.

Three Summer Months: Yellow gauze.

Three Fall Months: Dark violet cheese-cloth or voile.

Grandmother: Dark dress, white cap, glasses, gray hair, etc.

Children: Present day winter clothes.

The Twelve Months may be played by boys or girls, or both, and if desired, the costumes may be elaborated as follows:

January: Toboggan-cap. Suit of white underwear, edged with swan's-down or cotton. Band of sleigh-bells. Inside of cloak decorated with cotton snowflakes. On border, "Good Resolutions." Sled on back, cotton snowball in hand.

February: Heart-shaped head-dress. White panel in front with large red heart on left. Cloak decoration, hearts, cherries, and hatchets. Border, St. Valentine, Lincoln, Washington.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

- March:** Wild red wig made of hair-dusters. Close-fitting gray suit. Bellows at side. Cloak decoration, pussy-willows and shamrocks. Border, "In like a lion, out like a lamb." Kite on back.
- April:** Kate Greenaway gown of sky-blue. Spangled effect of rain inside cloak. Border, "April showers bring May flowers." Carries fool's bauble or an umbrella.
- May:** Wreath of blossoms. Kate Greenaway gown of pink and white. Cloak decoration, blossoms. Border, "Queen of the May." Carries bird-cage and small May-pole.
- June:** Wreath of roses. Gown of rose-patterned muslin. Cloak decoration, leaves. Border, "Summer is a-comin' in." Carries small tree and graduation certificate.
- July:** Boy scout costume. Cloak decoration, wigwam and Indian figures. Border, "My country, 'tis of thee." Carries flag.
- August:** Bathing-suit. Cloak decoration, fishes and net. Border, "All work and no play makes Jill a dull girl." Carries parasol.
- September:** Wreath of autumn leaves. School suit. Cloak decoration, fruit and autumn leaves. Border, "Thirty days hath September." Carries school-books.
- October:** Jack o' Lantern on head. Close-fitting orange suit. Cloak decoration, squirrels, and

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

nuts. Border, "October's bright blue weather."
Carries a basket of nuts.

November: Puritan costume. Cloak decoration,
turkeys and pumpkins. Border, "Be ye thank-
ful." Carries Thanksgiving basket.

December: Santa Claus costume. Pack on back.
Cloak decoration, toys. Border, "Merry
Christmas." Carries small Christmas tree.

The cloaks are fastened to the wrists with loops,
so that, while allowing freedom of movement, they
may, when desired, be easily extended to disclose the
inside decorations.

